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International Communism

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Revolution

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An interview and an appraisal

Berlinguer's Communism

Arrigo Levi

AN attempt to analyse the policies and aims of the most important communist party of the West, *Partito Comunista Italiano,* should begin by giving some figures indicating the strength of the party and its position in Italy's political landscape. We can provide a very up-to-date picture thanks to the general election which was held in Italy on 7 May 1972.

This was the seventh general election to be held in Italy since the war. For the first time, the PCI obtained more than nine million votes and it reached its highest ever percentage: 27·2 per cent of valid votes.[1] The new leader of the party, 50 year old Enrico Berlinguer, successor to such mighty figures as Gramsci and Togliatti, could be satisfied with the results of this electoral battle, the first which he had fought as leader.

However, the blessings were very mixed. If the Communist vote had increased, the 'Communist-centred' vote had gone down, due mainly to the very serious defeat suffered by the small Left-Socialist party, PSIUP. While the PCI increased the number of its representatives in the Chamber from 177 to 179, PSIUP lost all 23 of its members, who usually voted with the Communists. In the Senate, PCI-PSIUP Senators (they had a common list) were reduced from 101 to 94.[2]

What happened to the PCI in the elections of 7 May was, however, not as important for its political strategy and future as what happened to the other parties. *Democrazia Cristiana,* widely expected to suffer a serious defeat, retained its forces quite intact; indeed, it increased by one the number of its representatives in the Chamber. The neo-Fascists of Signor Almirante (MSI) obtained a much smaller success than expected. Most important of all, as a result of the simultaneous decrease in the numbers of the communist-centred Left and increase in the neo-Fascist

[1] The PCI had got 4·6 per cent of the vote in 1921; 18·9 in 1946; 31·0 in 1948 (together with the Socialists); 22·6 in 1953; 22·7 in 1958; 25·3 in 1963; 26·9 in 1968. All these figures relate to elections for the Chamber of Deputies (for the Constituent Assembly in 1946).

[2] Overall the PCI–PSIUP vote in the Chamber went down from 31·4 to 29·1 per cent; another 1 per cent was split between 'Manifesto' and other small 'New Left' groupings. PSIUP went down (in the Chamber) from 4·5 to 1·9 per cent. In elections for the Senate, the common list for PCI–PSIUP (no 'New Left' lists were presented) went down from 30·0 to 28·2 per cent. (All comparisons are with the 1968 elections.) On 16 July, at the end of the PSIUP congress in Rome, the party's secretary, Mr. Valori, announced the decision to disband it and unite with the Communist Party. Altogether 67 per cent of the delegates voted for this decision, 8 per cent voted to join the Socialist Party and 25 per cent voted for the continuation of the restructured PSIUP. A Roman wit said that the initials stood for 'Partito Scomparso In Un Pomeriggio' ('The party that vanished in an afternoon'). Enrico Berlinguer hailed the merger as a Communist victory.

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Right, the political space between the PCI and the MSI remained wide enough to allow majorities to be formed within that safe democratic area as they have always been throughout the last 25 years: without any need of support from either of the two extremist parties.[3]

Thus, in spite of the fact that the PCI vote went up, it could be said that Berlinguer's electoral strategy had failed. His plan had been to see *Democrazia Cristiana* severely beaten and reduced in size by the attacks from Right and Left. A smaller DC, no longer able to form a genuinely democratic majority with the 'half-wings' (Liberals or Socialists) would then have to make an agonizing decision between the 'wings', neo-Fascists or Communists. Either choice would leave it weakened and split. Berlinguer's hope was that the Christian Democrats would, in the end, turn to the Communists for help in forming a 'new majority of the Left', within which the PCI would be the senior partner, or would at least avoid being a junior partner, as all other parties had been in the past when allied to the DC.

This plan misfired completely. Yet there were compensations. Optimists in the Party could point to two more satisfactory results of the 1972 elections. First of all, the challenge from the New Left was practically annihilated: 'Manifesto' got only 0·7 per cent of the vote (223,000 votes in all) and lost all five of its MPs. Secondly, the PCI gained a high percentage of the younger vote.[4]

This did not, however, make the PCI's 'long march towards power' much shorter. The Party had proved strong and healthy; but once again its attempt to attain power by peaceful, democratic means had failed. It seemed forever doomed to remain in opposition. Its percentage of the vote had increased by less than 5 points in 19 years, mainly at the expense of other Leftist parties which it already controlled and at an ever-decelerating rate. Even if it continued to expand at the same rate, it would not reach a majority before the latter part of the 21st century. What could it do to shorten such a long wait?

[3] *Democrazia Cristiana* got 38·8 per cent of the vote in the elections for the Chamber, as opposed to 39·1 in 1968. Changes among other democratic parties were limited. As compared with the makeup of the former Chamber, the new alignment was as follows: PSI 61 representatives (62); PSDI 29 (29); PRI 14 (9); PLI 21 (31). In theory, both a Centre majority (from Christian Democrats to Liberals) and a Centre-Left majority (from Christian Democrats to Socialists) were possible. A Centre coalition government, including Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats, with Republican outside support, was formed by Signor Andreotti on 26 June. The 'democratic area', from Liberals to Socialists, still controlled 61·3 per cent of the vote, as against 61·4 in 1968. The MSI-Monarchists coalition got (in the Chamber) 8·7 per cent, as opposed to 5·8 in 1968 (in 1953 it had reached 12·7 per cent). Its representatives (in the Chamber) increased from 30 to 56. In the Chamber, the extreme Left and the extreme Right totalled 235 representatives, as against 230 in the Chamber of 1968; democratic parties totalled 395, as against 400.

[4] Voting for the Senate is limited to citizens of 25 years or over, as opposed to 21 or over for the Chamber of Deputies. By comparing results for each party in either Chamber, one can make a reasonable appraisal of the distribution of the 3,230,000 'young' votes (of people between the ages of 21 and 24). *Democrazia Cristiana* got 46 per cent of them (1,485,000 votes); the PCI got 36 per cent of them (1,168,000). Only a very small percentage of the young voted for the neo-Fascists. Judging by these results, Italy is moving towards a two-party system.

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Obviously a deep, perhaps even an agonizing reappraisal of the Party's strategy was necessary. This was the moment when the Party could show whether its reputation as the most open-minded Communist Party in the West was deserved. How realistic was its new leader's claim (in his 50th anniversary speech of 31 January 1971) that the PCI would 'make the Revolution victorious in Italy and in the West', carrying it 'far beyond the limits within which history made it victorious in the East'?

Is the PCI capable of such a mighty enterprise? Much has been written about the contradictions of the Italian Communist Party, torn between East and West: but how vital and constructive are these contradictions? What kind of society has the PCI in mind for Italy and 'the West'? And to what extent could it be reconciled with the Western traditions of liberty and pluralism?

IT seems right that a description of PCI policy and ideology today should be based on the new Party Secretary's ideas. Enrico Berlinguer, like Gramsci, is a Sardinian (whereas both Togliatti and Longo were Piedmontese); he is virtually unknown outside Italy and even in Italy itself he remains, perhaps because of his retiring habits, rather an unknown quantity to this day.

In a party which still has a few of the older, more colourful and forceful personalities, like Amendola and Giancarlo Pajetta, Enrico Berlinguer appears as the typical representative of a younger generation of leaders who have made their entire career inside the Party apparatus, but who can combine the grey seriousness of the *apparatchik* with the *aggiornamento* of the Left-wing intellectual. Pajetta once said jokingly of Berlinguer that 'egli s'iscrisse giovanissimo alla Direzione del PCI' ('As a very young man he decided to join the Party . . . Executive'). He still sits on the very chair on which he first sat when he became a young *funzionario di partito* immediately after the war. He did not become a member of Parliament until 1968. Berlinguer comes from a noble Sardinian family of radical anti-fascist traditions. His wife is a devout Roman Catholic and he is a quiet, serious (some would say mournful) pipe-smoking family man. What he lacks in Latin *panache*, he makes up in his deep personal commitment to all he says or thinks: hardly a characteristic trait of the *apparatchik*. He is very Sardinian, in many ways a rather un-Italian personality; the Sardinians are a serious and lovable race.[5]

To expect great originality from such a character would lead to disappointment. Berlinguer is not (or at least not yet) a creative ideologue; he seems to have learnt thoroughly Togliatti's lesson that a leader should stay close to the centre of the Party spectrum, and among the leading figures in the Party he is probably the nearest to

[5] A sympathetic profile of Enrico Berlinguer was recently written by Peter Nichols (*The Times*, 15 March 1972).

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the 'meeting point' of the various tendencies within it. He doesn't lack moral courage, and has shown it in some clashes with the Russians: he has also made some very orthodox speeches at international communist conferences. His ideas, though not very original (some would say that Berlinguer's strategy is borrowed from Amendola), carry great weight, and this is so not just because he is the Party leader.

Even though his views may have changed to some extent under the impact of his Party's 23rd Congress (Milan, March 1972) and of the ensuing electoral compaign, what he said in this interview still represents on the whole Berlinguer's basic political ideas.

THE first point raised during our conversation concerned the political strategy of the PCI: what did the Party mean when it said that its purpose was the creation of a 'new majority', also defined as 'a Left alternative'? At the same time, what did Luigi Longo mean when he stated in *l'Unità* that the Party was also available 'for all agreements and convergences, even with forces of the present [the then Centre-Left] government coalition'? What was the real aim of the PCI: to become a 'converging opposition', or to take part in a new government coalition, and if so, with whom precisely? It may be useful at this point to remind the reader that at the time the Centre-Left government of Christian Democrats, Socialists, Social-Democrats and Republicans was in deep trouble; the Socialists were already saying that, after the new elections, then expected to take place in spring 1973, they would aim at forming with the Christian Democrats a new government based on 'more advanced equilibria', meaning that some form of outside support from the PCI would be acceptable; the anticipated dissolution of Parliament was, at the time, only a remote possibility.

In answer to my question (*How can one imagine the creation of a new majority of the Left?*), Berlinguer said:

> *One cannot imagine it, the parties and party policies being what they are today. The rise of a new majority presupposes an extensive reshuffling of political cards and of party alignments. It is not, therefore, a hypothesis for the immediate future. Trying to forecast how the Communist Party's entry into government might take place would be like trying one's hand at prophecy. The only thing we can say with absolute certainty is that we shall never participate in a coalition from a subordinate position, as has always, without exception, been the case with previous partners of* Democrazia Cristiana.

Is there any possibility, I then asked, *of the formation of a DC-PCI coalition on the basis of equality between the two parties, a type of* grosse Koalition? Berlinguer replied: *There must first be a profound change in the* Democrazia Cristiana; *whether such an evolution would or would not lead to the breaking-up of that party, we cannot yet know.*

As we can see, Berlinguer did not consider at this time that it would be realistic to think of a 'new majority' as something for the

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near future. One year later, however, he would base his party's entire electoral campaign on the offer of participation by the Communists in a 'new majority', together with the Catholics and Socialists. In early 1971, not only Berlinguer, but all the main leaders of the Party, whom I interviewed during the same period,[6] were thinking about a future shift in the PCI's position from the opposition towards the 'government area'.

On this, I asked Berlinguer: *Does the PCI plan to adopt after the elections* [then expected, as already mentioned, for 1973] *a policy of 'converging opposition', as implied in Longo's statement, moving towards a hypothetical DC-PSI government of 'more advanced equilibria'*? Berlinguer replied:

> *On this point we have some reservations, which are not due to opportunism. Our reservations are substantial. We do not believe that a two-party government* [DC-PSI] *would in itself be a very great step forward. It may or may not represent such a step. This will depend on two things: its programme, and the question of the delimitation of the government majority, that is to say of its relation to us. Should this formula lead to an open attitude towards the Left-wing* [Communist] *opposition, it may turn out to be a positive evolution.*

What attitude would the Communist Party take towards such a DC-PSI coalition government, 'open' towards the Left? Berlinguer answered:

> *There would be no new party relations* [between the PCI in opposition and the Christian Democrats and Socialists inside the government]. *The PCI would maintain its general opposition to government policy but full respect for a correct parliamentary system ought to become systematic. The government would not be denied its powers of legislative initiative, but there would be more room for parliamentary initiative. Government bills ought not to be presented as something to which one can only say yes or no; they ought to be discussed and freely modified in Parliament. There have recently been some episodes of this nature. But this new relationship between the government and the PCI ought to be announced explicitly. This practice ought to be made official and general.*

I then objected:

> *Wouldn't such an ambiguous relationship between the government and the Communist opposition make life impossible for the government? Wouldn't such 'assembly rule', granting the Communists power without responsibility, bring the DC-PSI government to an early demise, and wouldn't the only purpose of the whole operation be to open the way for the long-awaited 'new majority of the Left'?*

Answering, Berlinguer said: *If a government falls, it means that its ideas are wrong. If the ideas are right, it won't fall.* On the same subject, Giorgio Napolitano told me at the time:

[6] A. Levi, *PCI: la lunga marcia verso il potere* (Etas-Kompass 1971).

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> *Of course, the rationale of the system we suggest is entirely Italian. It is born of historical factors, as well as of our strength and of the way we use it. However, only with such rules and with such special relations among the various political forces can Italian parliamentary democracy grow: and in no other way can the great reforms which the country needs be achieved.*

Such were the thoughts of Enrico Berlinguer (as well as of the other leaders of the Party) in 1971 on the problem of how the PCI would come to share in governmental power. It was not clear how large the share would be; this would depend to a large extent on how the other political forces reacted to the Communist challenge and offer. But the fundamental ambiguity of the project has not yet disappeared.

Let me also quote Berlinguer's views, formulated in the same interview, on the other main points of the PCI's political and ideological platform, beginning with foreign policy. I asked: *We know that the PCI wants Italy to become neutral, just as it wants all power blocs to be dissolved: can you clarify the question of whether the PCI believes that Italy ought to become neutral only* after *the dissolution of power blocs?* The answer was a resounding '*No.*' Berlinguer went on to say: *We Communists are in any case in favour of Italy's becoming neutral, even if the blocs are to remain in existence, as a guarantee of greater security, and also because we believe that the Atlantic tie is a mortgage on, as well as a threat to, the democratic development of our country.* [I interpret this to mean: to the entry of the PCI into a government coalition.]

I then asked: *Wouldn't you accept NATO at least as a necessity, as long as the power blocs exist, in order to maintain the balance of power in Europe, the Soviet Union being so much larger and more powerful than all the other European states?* Berlinguer answered once more in the negative:

> *No. One can conceive of our* [Italy's] *getting out of NATO as a process, as a separation having various stages. There are more immediate problems, which ought to be faced first, such as the existence of foreign bases and our renunciation of military integration. But the process ought to result in the complete breaking up of the tie. If you asked me: would you accept the European Economic Community?, I would answer that this is another matter, and that we only raise the problem of its transformation from a 'small Europe' to a 'great Europe'. But if you ask me: would you accept NATO?, then I answer decisively in the negative. I admit that there exists, on this point, a deep cleavage between us and the parties of the present Centre-Left majority, though one can see a few signs that a dialogue and a partial convergence are becoming possible.*

On the EEC, Giorgio Amendola told me during the same period:

> *We accept the EEC, we are in it, but we are in it in order to transform it.*

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In what way?

> '*One must organize the division of labour in Europe: one must organize the economy, then European security. This is the aim we are working towards. I envisage a gradual 'disarticulation' of the blocs. . . . Within this framework, new relations of economic cooperation* [between East and West] *would develop, and the character of the European Economic Community would be modified. . . . It would eventually occupy a neutral position, including states belonging to both blocs.*' It would ultimately become '*a sort of regional economic organization of the UN.*'

So much for the PCI's foreign policy: as we shall see, one year later Berlinguer was to take a softer position on NATO and the PCI's new commitment to Europe would be stated more strongly.[7] Were the changes purely tactical or were they substantial?

As far as the PCI's relations with the Soviet Union and the Communist camp are concerned, the views of Berlinguer and the Party have not changed at all. With regard to the USSR, Berlinguer has stated: *The PCI would never break its solidarity with the Socialist countries and with the workers-and-revolutionary world movement. We don't walk on this road, and we shall never do so.*[8] I then asked him: *Taking into account your ties with the Communist movement, why should we believe that your Party, once in power, would not behave like all other Communist Parties in the past, that is to say would not take all power for itself?* Berlinguer's answer was curtly philosophical: *Things which have never happened before sometimes happen; indeed, such things happen all the time.*

I went on to ask: *How do you, Italian Communists, judge the so-called Socialist countries? And in what way would Italian Communist society be different from the others in existence?* Here is Berlinguer's answer, which is one of the strongest statements on the 'diversity' of the PCI (the 'Communist giraffe', as Togliatti used to say) as compared with other Communist Parties:

> *We have said that within the Socialist countries there exist contradictions, and also that there are limitations, of different degrees of importance, to what a Socialist democracy ought to be. We therefore state that these Socialist countries ought to develop further their Socialist democracy. But whatever road these Socialist democracies may take, were it the widest possible, it would always be different from ours, different from the path that the development of a Socialist democracy ought to follow in Italy and the West.*

[7] The PCI organized a special international conference on the EEC in Rome in November 1971. Texts of the conference papers and speeches have been published in *Quaderno di Politica ed Economia* (a supplement to *Politica ed Economia*, the Party's monthly), No. 6, Nov.–Dec. 1971, under the title. '*I Comunisti Italiani e l'Europa*'.

[8] This quotation is from Berlinguer's speech to the 13th Party Congress: see *l'Unita*, 14 March 1972.

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In what ways would it be different?

> *For Italy, party pluralism is surely something one cannot renounce; this is a fundamental difference. We have stated, ever since 1965, that the rules for the formation of majorities and minorities would remain valid and be respected even in a Socialist society in Italy. Apart from our word, and our history in the Resistance, what other guarantees can we give? We can give as a guarantee the democratic will of the masses, which has been to a large extent educated and created by us.*

Let me now come to the final point of Berlinguer's political platform: economic policy. What kind of Socialist 'model' has the PCI in mind for Italy? How far would it go in nationalizing sectors of the economy? To what extent would Italy's 'mixed market economy' remain in existence?

On these problems, Berlinguer told me:

> *There are sectors of the manufacturing industry—and this applies not only to present-day society, but also to a society approaching Socialism, indeed to a Socialist society—there are sectors that ought to be reserved for private initiative, even though within the framework of a national economic plan, because in many sectors private initiative is more efficient, as is shown by the experience of some Socialist countries. The policy of nationalization or socialization has proved to be, if implemented in full, a negative factor, from the political as well as from the economic point of view.*
>
> *There are indeed some basic sectors which ought to be in the hands of the State, and ought to be socialized. I believe that one ought to be very clear on the matter of the expropriation or non-expropriation of private property: one ought to say exactly what one wants and what one does not want to expropriate. This would be valid for the 'long run', if not for eternity: one shouldn't leave any uncertainty among the entrepreneurs. For instance, we Communists are in favour of the total expropriation of urban building areas. With regard to industry, we say that the production of basic pharmaceutical products ought to become public. But we do not speak of nationalizing the chemical industry. One must be clear about one's intentions.*

This was Enrico Berlinguer one year before he became leader of the Party; he already spoke, at that time, with full authority. His idea of a Communist Italy (or, at least, of an Italy ruled by a coalition including the Communist Party and 'approaching Socialism'), though vague on many points, was, on the whole, clearly outlined. It was a picture of an Italy maintaining (like Chile) its democratic institutions[9]; of an

[9] An important debate in *Rinascita* (19 February 1971), in which Ingrao, Natta and Giancarlo Pajetta, among others, took part, left grave doubts about the seriousness of the PCI's assurances on its attachment to the multi-party system. Pajetta stated that 'a superstructure of bourgeois institutions could not correspond to a Socialist basis', and spoke favourably of 'multi-party' Poland. Ingrao said: 'The more variegated and articulate class and party relations are in a society, the more importance should be given to the directing role of the Communist Party.'

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Italy leaving NATO by stages, moving from a 'Gaullist' policy to neutrality; of an Italy whose economy would be further centralized, and where private enterprise would be allowed to exist only in certain sectors of the economy; of an Italy whose participation in the EEC would aim at completely changing the character of the EEC itself, and whose final purpose would be to bring about a 'disarticulated' Europe.

Well, some might like this picture, some might not: I, for one, do not see how, in such a situation, a rush to full nationalization of all important sectors of the economy could be avoided; I also believe that life would be made quite difficult (as in Chile) for opposition parties; I consider that the international consequences for the balance of power in Europe would be quite serious. But, whatever one feels about 'Berlinguer's model', one cannot say that the picture itself is too unclear, or that Berlinguer is only trying to confuse the issues or hide the differences between his party and the others. As we have seen, he left no doubt that, because of these differences, the rise of a 'new majority' going from the Communists, through the Socialists, to the Christian Democrats, was not possible in the near future.

ONE year later, at the 13th Party Congress, his policy was on most points unchanged. On such matters as economic policy or the PCI's relations with the 'Socialist camp', his formulations remained exactly the same, though his statement in Milan concerning the space to be left to private enterprise was not very encouraging for private entrepreneurs. (*The problem in Italy*—he said—*is not that of controlling and managing everything. A great deal of room can and must remain for private enterprise, in particular for handicrafts and the other middle-producing classes.* Anybody outside these particular categories could not feel very much at ease.) On Europe, especially in his final reply, Berlinguer made a strong effort to explain convincingly the PCI's newly acquired European convictions.

A novelty appeared in the opening speech, on Italy's relations to NATO. Berlinguer said:

> *The question of overcoming the ties of subordination which link our country to NATO cannot be reduced to the simple question of a declaration for or against the Pact. Instead, the fight against the Atlantic Pact will be much more effective, the more it is identified with a general movement for European liberation from American hegemony, with the gradual overcoming of the opposite blocs leading to their liquidation.*

Replying, in his final speech, to a statement by the Secretary of the Liberal Party, according to whom '*the Communists would like to carry Italy out of the West*', Berlinguer also said: *No, we want to free Italy from its subordination to foreign imperialism. . . . We want to give back to Italy its independence, its sovereignty, its security, . . . its role as a great and free nation of the West.*

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Berlinguer's line at the Congress was somewhat generously summed up by Enzo Bettiza in *Corriere della Sera* in the formula: 'Social-democratization of Italy, Finlandization of Europe' (I agree on the second tenet, not on the first one).

The newest departure in Berlinguer's pre-electoral platform concerned however the PCI's offer to participate in a coalition government (after the elections), together with other 'popular forces', both Catholic and Socialist.

The first aim of the Party's electoral campaign, he said, was to '*make the* Democrazia Cristiana *lose ground on its left*'; this was one of the conditions necessary '*in order to free the popular and democratic Catholic forces, opening them up for contacts and cooperation with Communist and Socialist forces*'. From a 'fundamental crisis' of the *Democrazia Cristiana*, which would make it impossible for this party '*to control its inner contradictions*', a great political movement would arise, allowing '*Catholic currents*' to come to an agreement with '*Socialist and Communist forces*', thus making '*a government alternative of the Left*' possible.

This was widely interpreted in Italy to mean that Berlinguer would be ready to carry the PCI into a government formed by a chastized and weakened *Democrazia Cristiana* (or indeed by a splinter Leftist group of this party), as well as by the PSI and by some Leftist groups dominated by the Communists (like the PSIUP). At the same time, Berlinguer now forcefully rejected the Socialists' plan for a future DC-PSI government ('of advanced equilibria') supported from the outside by the Communists: a possibility which he was far from rejecting one year before. Now Berlinguer gave the impression that he wanted to exert great pressure on the Socialists in order to make it difficult for them to join a government without the Communists, tying them to a common policy of the Left: either all in, or all out. The former policy of a 'converging opposition' was now abandoned. Instead, the PCI put forward a much more ambitious plan for taking power, a plan which, as we have seen, had previously been considered unrealistic by Berlinguer for a long time ahead.

This shift was, quite possibly, due in part to electoral reasons. It was, however, based on the PCI's or Berlinguer's new assessment of the general situation in the country. Due to a variety of reasons, one of which (but not the main one) was the PCI's soft but insidious opposition of the last few years, a polarization of political forces had undoubtedly taken place in Italy. The main causes were deeply rooted in Italy's uneven development. A simultaneous and diverging pull to the Left and to the Right, apparent in the rise of neo-Leftist groups, as well as in the strengthening of the neo-Fascists, had first strained DC-PSI relations within the Centre-Left coalition, then had made this coalition no longer viable (at least, until new elections). In order not to lose contact with their electors, the PSI and the *Democrazia Cristiana* had had to begin a simultaneous and diverging shift away from the

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Left-Centre. If, however, the attempt by Forlani's DC to rebuild its old image of a 'Centre party' were to fail, if the DC were therefore to suffer the expected losses on its right, while losing at the same time on its left, then no room would remain in the centre for a new 'democratic' coalition government. The country would then be plunged into an extremely serious political crisis. The way out, Berlinguer seemed to be saying, could be a new coalition including a strong, reliable party like the PCI: a party which gave firm assurances that it had nothing to do with the irresponsible revolutionaries of the New Left, and which could indeed claim with some justification that it was the only one capable of defending Law in the streets, and of re-establishing Order in the factories. If the alternative was chaos, wouldn't such a big deal be attractive to many?

Such was Berlinguer's challenge to the other parties. How was it to be judged? In *Manifesto's* opinion, it was 'a colossal mystification': Berlinguer's former comrades, now fighting the PCI from its left, thought it nonsensical to offer government cooperation to *Democrazia Cristiana* while this party (according to Berlinguer himself) was rapidly moving to the right, and was saying as loudly as possible that it would never join forces with the PCI. Answering this criticism in an interview (*Rinascita*, 31 March 1972), Berlinguer claimed that after the elections any choice other than that of a coalition with the PCI would only 'unchain contradictions and clashes of the utmost severity between the popular forces, even the Catholic ones, and the government'. Such would be the case not only if a neo-Centrist government of Christian Democrats and Liberals were to be formed, but also if a new version of the Centre-Left without the Communists were attempted.

This was an unmistakable threat: if, Berlinguer seemed to be saying, you won't accept us inside the government (which would of course cause a serious split in the ranks of the Christian Democrats), you won't any longer be able to count on a soft or 'converging' Communist opposition; we shall no longer make things easy in Parliament nor shall we help in keeping the masses reasonably quiet; you will face instead the full strength of the Communist Party, of a party 'ready to fight on all grounds', as Berlinguer had already said, in a threatening voice and to a thunder of applause, in his otherwise 'soft' speech to the 13th Party Congress.

Looking at Berlinguer's platform for the electoral battle of 7 May, one cannot deny that it was, to a large extent, the logical development of the general line of the Party for the last 10 years. The long march towards power was based on a double strategy, made up of blandishments as well as warnings or threats: the threats came sometimes directly from the PCI, more often from the much more impatient 'New Left' (which was being used for their very different purposes by the extreme right as well as by the PCI). Free of guilt in the matter of the 'breaking up of the system', the Communist Party could in the end step forward quite convincingly as the least of all

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evils: better than civil war; better than anarchy; better than neo-Fascism. The last scene of the final act of this scenario would show the Communists taking power as saviours of the Constitution, as guarantors of Law and Order.

If this projected 'scenario' were to prove unrealistic, the Communist Party could either fall back on a strategy of more intransigent and disruptive opposition (a little push at this point would perhaps be enough to provoke the final crisis of the 'system'); or it could eat some of its own words (however painful a process, it could always be represented as a necessary 'strategic retreat' in order to defend the democratic order against a takeover by the fascist right) and keep up the good work of oiling through the opposition some of the rustier cogwheels of the 'system'.

Berlinguer's rather low-key electoral strategy did not take seriously into account the challenge from the New Leftist-Revolutionary groupings, present for the first time in 1972 on the electoral battlefield: the former Communists of *Il Manifesto* and the former Christian Democrats of the *Movimento Politico dei Lavoratori*, headed by the former leader of the Catholic Workers Association (ACLI), Signor Livio Labor. Theoretically, only the *Manifesto* could be a threat to the PCI; but even Livio Labor's *Movimento*, though aimed at the *Democrazia Cristiana*, might damage it, at least by preventing any leftist losses from the DC from reaching the Communist Party.

It was widely felt among political observers, before the elections, that the PCI was right in dismissing as relatively unimportant this new electoral challenge from the left; but no one could be quite certain that a surprise would not occur and that the PCI would not be losing votes on its left for the first time ever on May 7.

THIS did not happen, but on the whole Berlinguer's direct 'challenge' has failed. However, the fact that the Party itself has increased, even if very slightly, its vote of 1968, as well as the total victory which it won over the challenge from the New Left, should ensure that Berlinguer's personal position is not weakened, at least for some time.

The fact remains that the PCI has once again found itself 'condemned' to remain in opposition. There was virtually no chance that a government would be formed depending on its support, which was not only unwanted but unneeded by the Christian Democrats and all the other 'Centre' parties (Liberals, Republicans and Social Democrats). Even the Socialists saw their own position as totally different from that of the Communists: they were natural candidates for a government coalition, the Communists were not. The most they would do would be to try to persuade their partners in a new Centre-Left coalition (should such a coalition be formed instead of a Centre one) to tolerate a 'converging opposition' by the PCI. The new 'more advanced equilibria' could only mean, at the most, consultations with the Communists before the Reform Laws were passed by Parliament.

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But it was a fact that *Democrazia Cristiana*, emboldened by its success, rejected the Communists as 'fellow-travellers' more strongly than ever.

Furthermore, would the PCI accept once again such a subordinate position? Would it go back to its strategy of 1971 (as outlined in my interview with Berlinguer)? Or would it carry out its threat to adopt a more 'fighting' attitude than in the past?

This seemed to be the basic choice facing the Party after the May elections. Though it was impossible to make any firm prediction immediately after the vote, it could be pointed out that the smashing victory obtained over the New Left would make 'convergence' much easier than previously. The temptation to increase the 'angle of convergence' by playing down the remaining 'Soviet' features and ties of the Party might be much greater. As the near-socialist weekly *L'Espresso* wrote after the elections: 'Berlinguer and his followers ought to strengthen that anti-conformist movement which can make of the PCI a "unicum" in the international communist panorama, freeing it from some of that paleo-Marxist residuum which blurs its vision.'

Would the results of the 1972 elections then speed up the solution of the Party's contradictions? Would they increase the pace at which this 'giraffe' finally chose its herd of animals and decided what 'normal' animal it ought to resemble? In clearer terms, would it hasten the 'Westernization' and democratization (or even 'social-democratization') of the PCI?

Obviously, powerful forces inside the Party, probably led by Amendola, would move in that direction; other forces, probably led by Ingrao, would resist such a trend. In the middle, Enrico Berlinguer would surely have, in the course of the seventies, plenty of problems to face, as well as plenty of occasions which would allow him to show his real stature as a political leader and a statesman.

THE proclaimed PCI aim of 'making the Revolution victorious', not only in Italy, but 'in the West', of carrying 'socialism' beyond the narrow limits (how narrow, the PCI knew quite well) to which 'history' had 'condemned' it in the 'backward' Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, seems unrealistic. First of all, being the 'brightest' Party in the West didn't necessarily mean that the PCI was, within the Communist movement, the most creative of all Parties: as a matter of fact, the PCI has been consistently overestimated in the West, due to the 'press value' of some of its more unorthodox departures. In spite of its bright facade, the truth is that the PCI has always followed one or other of the Eastern Communist Parties in their more innovatory initiatives and has never been a leader. Malenkov and Khrushchev started de-Stalinization and de-centralization; Togliatti, with his 'polycentrism', only developed the new ideas coming, of all places, from Moscow. All the intellectual and practical endowment of revisionist neo-communism (the ideas of market socialism, the new analysis of the relations between the Party and society, etc.) came from the bitter

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experience of Poles, Czechs, Hungarians and Russians, not from Rome. I think it can be truly said that not even one of the new ideas appearing within communism during the last 20 years came from inside the PCI.

Under these circumstances, inventing a new model 'for the West' sounded more like propaganda than reality. But let us look at the PCI within its natural Italian 'milieu', let us measure it against Italian history, not that of the history of world communism. The achievements of the PCI, seen from this angle, are somewhat more impressive, but it has failed where all other national parties of the working class in the West have, at some point, succeeded: in winning an election and achieving power through the ballot. Representing one quarter of the electorate is no small achievement, but it is simply not good enough to form a government.

Although Italy's New Left condemns the PCI for being insufficiently 'revolutionary', the truth is that the Party is still judged unfit for government by a very large majority of Italians, including the Socialists. Leaders of the PSI, even the more pro-Communist ones, stated very clearly (as did Party Secretary Mancini, in his 'greetings' speech at the Communist Congress) that they and the Communists occupied different *collocazioni* (positions) in the political spectrum, participation in government being open to the Socialists but not to the Communists, mainly because of their strong ties with the Soviet Union and the communist movement.

If one looks at the PCI within the wider framework of Western Europe, this party, like the PCF, still seems to be a political movement of purely regional importance. One cannot see how the PCI and the PCF, from their position of limited power in Latin Europe, can hope to spread their influence all over 'the West'.

What can perhaps be believed is that, within the wider Western (or West European) framework, as a political force active in a highly pluralistic, greatly differentiated, experimental society still in search of better solutions for the problems of advanced industrialism, the existence of a 'communist challenge' in one or two of the great national regions might be historically invigorating.

We have already emphasized that no great claim to originality of thought could be advanced by Italy's Communists: the PCI had accepted, not invented, Italy's 'mixed' economy, just as it had criticized the Soviet 'command economy' model only years after everybody else; the PCI had accepted, albeit with reservations, Italian pluralistic democracy, they had not invented it, and they had not criticized Soviet 'democracy' until after everybody else had done so. They could not even claim to have originated some of the more stimulating pressures for 'participation' and 'a new way to run industry' which had appeared in the late sixties at the extreme left of the Italian political spectrum (they could only claim to have educated some of the new revolutionaries, before throwing them out of the Party).

However, Berlinguer's Communists had laboriously tried to assimilate

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all these various new trends, while keeping the Party together, and had been able to do so until now. No small achievement this. Even a consistent anti-Communist like the editor of *La Stampa*, Alberto Ronchey, recognized, on the eve of the 1972 elections, that 'some day things will have to be sorted out in dealing with the PCI: at the best possible moment'. Also, one has to admit that the PCI's contradictions are due, to a great extent, to the deeper social contradictions of an unsettled, half-developed country such as Italy, while its superficiality reflects the shallowness of Italian culture today.

One must finally recognize that if the 'system' were to fall apart it would be not so much as a result of the blows dealt it by the Communist Party as because of its own weaknesses. Whether the Communist Party will remain in the seventies an opposition party indirectly participating in the reform of Italian society or whether it will be able to try its hand at the business of government will depend more on other political forces than on the Communists themselves. If the house of Italian democracy were to collapse, it would be due not so much to 'big bad wolf-PCI' blowing against it, but to the fact that it was built of straw.

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Changing Russian Perspectives in the Balkans

F. Stephen Larrabee

INVOLVEMENT in the Balkans has been a persistent concern of Russian foreign policy for over two centuries. With only occasional lapses, Russian leaders, both Soviet and tsarist, have regarded the region as essential to their definition of 'national interest'. In the nineteenth century Russian interest in the Balkans was a function of the primary interest in the Straits, which tsarist leaders saw as important both for strategic and economic reasons. Following the Russian defeat in the Crimean War, Russian interest in the area was given additional impetus by the rise of pan-Slavism, and the tendency on the part of the Balkan Slavs to see in Russia their liberator from the 'Turkish yoke'. While Russian interest in the Straits remained primary, both factors served to keep Russia continually involved in a series of Balkan quagmires up to the outbreak of the first world war.

While the Soviet government has renounced the appeals of orthodoxy and Slavism, its involvement in Balkan affairs has been no less apparent. The rapid communization of the Balkans after the second world war, the Tito-Stalin dispute in 1948, the Soviet-Albanian rift in 1961, and the Rumanian defiance in 1964 have all borne witness to the degree of Soviet involvement in the area. Moreover in recent years Soviet interest and concern in the Balkans have increased as a result of three interrelated factors:

(1) Soviet interest in the Middle East and emergence as a Mediterranean naval power;
(2) The Sino-Soviet split and the growth of Chinese power;
(3) The increased national self-assertiveness on the part of most Balkan nations.

With the emergence of Soviet interests in the Middle East and the corresponding rise of the Soviet Union as a naval power in the Mediterranean, the Soviet interest in the Balkans has taken on a new dimension. Today the Balkans are no longer simply an area peripheral to the prime Soviet interests in Eastern Europe (i.e. the so-called 'Iron Triangle' composed of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland) but more and more a gateway to the Mediterranean, and hence an important factor in Soviet access to the Middle East. As Soviet interests have expanded so has the USSR's need for mobile forces and adequate supply routes and facilities—and correspondingly its interest in the Balkans. In particular, expansion into the Middle East has increased its desire to prevent the emergence of a power vacuum in the Balkans which could be filled by a major rival.

At the same time as the USSR's interest in the Balkans has increased

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as a function of its new global status and stake in the Middle East, its hegemony in the Balkans has been increasingly challenged, first by the increased national self-assertiveness of the countries in the area, and secondly by the emergence of China as a rival influence. In actual fact the two trends have been closely related.

Nationalism, of course, has always been an important factor in Balkan politics but in the last decade it has taken on an increasingly anti-Soviet flavour. The Yugoslav defiance of the Soviet Union in 1948 served as an instructive example of the virtues of a policy based on anti-Soviet nationalism for other Balkan leaders. That this lesson was not lost on them became clear with the Soviet-Albanian rift in 1961 and Rumania's drift towards a more independent policy in the early sixties. The over all effect of this re-emergence of nationalism has been to precipitate a decline in Soviet influence, or at least a reduction in Moscow's ability to rule by fiat in an area that began as a bulwark of Soviet policy.

SUCH manifestations of nationalism would not in themselves have been of paramount concern to the Soviet Union, however, had they not been accentuated by the more fundamental problem of increased Chinese influence in the area. The spectre of the Balkans turning into a Chinese sphere of influence, however far-fetched or premature, has come to haunt the Kremlin seriously now that China has emerged from its diplomatic isolation and begun to show increased willingness to challenge the Soviet Union in areas far from its borders. The Soviets have feared that increased Chinese incursions in the Balkans could have long-term reverberations elsewhere in Eastern Europe if other bloc countries, following the Balkan example, should begin to reassess their relationship to China. China already has a bridgehead in Albania and recent attempts by that country to move towards closer *rapprochement* with its Balkan neighbours [1] have been viewed by the Soviets as little more than a Trojan horse for the spread of Chinese influence in the area.[2]

Two trends have manifested themselves in Soviet policy as a result of this new focus on the Balkans:

(1) An attempt in bilateral relations to reassert Soviet hegemony, or at least guard against a further erosion of control;
(2) Calls for multilateral cooperation in the Balkans which would serve wider Soviet foreign policy goals.

[1] On 5 February 1971 Albania and Yugoslavia announced the decision to exchange ambassadors for the first time since the end of the second world war. This was followed some three months later by Albania's establishment of diplomatic relations with Greece, which terminated the state of war that had existed between the two countries since the second world war. Bulgaria has also been included in Albania's attempts at Balkan *rapprochement:* the two countries agreed on 15 November 1970 on re-establishment of relations at *chargé d'affaires* level.

[2] See in particular the article in the Hungarian *Magyar Hirlap* (13 August 1971) which accused the Chinese of attempting to promote a 'Tirana-Belgrade-Bucharest axis' against the Soviet Union.

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The simultaneous pursuit of these two goals has, to some extent, conflicted with another. A more assertive—at times even militant—policy in bilateral relations has contradicted Soviet calls for turning the Balkans into a 'zone of peace'. How and why this is so can perhaps be best understood by examining first the direction of Soviet bilateral relations in the Balkans in the last several years, and secondly the Soviet concept of Balkan cooperation.

Rumania

The new Soviet concern with the Balkans has been most evident in relations with Rumania. While still a member of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon, Rumania has displayed increasing differences with the Soviet Union in recent years. These differences first manifested themselves in the early sixties in the dispute over Comecon integration and specialization which led to the now famous April 1964 CC plenum declaration repudiating the Soviet proposal for a joint planning body within Comecon on the grounds that it would infringe on national sovereignty. Since the Comecon dispute came to the surface, Rumanian-Soviet differences have broadened to encompass many other intra-bloc issues such as the command structure of the Warsaw Pact; relations with the West, particularly West Germany, and recently the United States; policy towards the Arab states and Israel; and the attitude to be adopted towards the 1968 Prague Spring and the subsequent Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia.

Had it not been for the need to focus attention on Czechoslovakia in 1968 the differences between Moscow and Bucharest might have come to a head earlier. The intervention in Czechoslovakia upset one of the fundamental calculations upon which Rumanian policy was based—that Moscow would refrain from armed intervention provided an ally maintained membership in the Warsaw Pact and did not deviate from communist one-party rule.[3] Despite a very real sense of threat to Rumania's own security, Ceausescu boldly condemned the invasion [4] and announced that the Rumanians would resist with force any attempt to transgress Rumanian territory.[5]

In its subsequent resistance to Soviet hegemony Rumania has not only defended its oft-repeated thesis that relations between communist states must be based on independence, sovereignty, and mutual non-interference but has sought increased ties with its renegade neighbour Yugoslavia, to the point where, as a recent Yugoslav commentator noted,

[3] See J. F. Brown, 'Rumania Today: The Strategy of Defiance', *Problems of Communism* (March/April 1969), p. 32.

[4] In a speech to the Grand National Assembly, Ceausescu stated that the invasion constituted 'a flagrant transgression of the national independence and sovereignty of the Czechoslovak people; an act which completely contradicted the fundamental norms that must govern relations between socialist countries and communist parties, and the generally recognized principles of international law' (*Scanteia*, 23 August 1968).

[5] Scanteia, loc. cit.

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'in international politics the two countries have similar or identical views on the problems of the struggle for peace, of security, independence and equal cooperation among various states'.[6] This *rapprochement* has also been evident in the frequent exchange of visits between leading statesmen of the two countries[7] as well as an increase in trade.[8]

The major Soviet concern, however, has been Rumania's relation to China. Given the longevity, depth, and range of other differences between the Soviet Union and Rumania, the Kremlin has been particularly sensitive to any warming of relations with its communist rival. Fledgling Rumanian attempts at *rapprochement* with China were evident as far back as 1963. The real turning-point, however, was the massive Chinese aid given to Rumania at the time of the floods in 1970.[9] The aid offer was followed by several visits of high Rumanian officials to Peking, one by Rumanian Premier Emil Bodnaras in June 1970 and another by Rumanian Defence Minister Ionita about a month later.

Fear that *rapprochement* might be turning into an informal alliance was intensified by the announcement that China had granted Rumania a long-term interest-free loan of about 244,000,000 dollars for the purchase of equipment and installations.[10] The fact that Chinese technical personnel would be stationed in Rumania to assist in the construction of the installations—the first major example of a Chinese presence in Europe outside Albania—can only have been regarded as an ominous sign by the Kremlin. Moreover, statements such as those by K'an Sheng, member of the standing committee of the CCP Politburo, who at the time of the Bodnaras visit stressed that the Chinese 'would, as always, fulfil their internationalist duty and firmly support the Rumanian people's just struggle to oppose foreign aggression and interference',[11] have only served to increase Soviet anxiety.

WHILE it would be inaccurate to say that Ceausescu's visit to Peking in June 1971 was an indication that Rumania had 'abandoned its position of neutrality in the Sino-Soviet conflict' and 'virtually

[6] Dragoljub Vujica, *Politika* (Belgrade, 19 November 1971).

[7] This *rapprochement* has been reflected in the following most important exchanges of visits: January 1970, Premier Maurer to Belgrade; July 1970, standing presidium member Bodnaras on holiday in Yugoslavia, received by Tito; July 1970, Premier Ribicic in Bucharest; November 1970, Ceausescu visit to Tito; December 1970, Defence Minister Ljubicic in Bucharest; May 1971, Foreign Minister Tepavac in Bucharest; June 1971, Defence Minister Ionita in Belgrade; and the Timisoara meeting (23 and 24 November 1971) between Ceausescu and Tito.

[8] Trade between Yugoslavia and Rumania in 1972 is projected at the 150 million dollar mark. See Vujica in *Politika*, loc. cit.

[9] Estimated to be about 20,000,000 dollars. *Die Furche*, 15 September 1971; Peter Kunz, *Publik*, 11 June 1971.

[10] Reuter, 8 March 1971. The main protocol signed in Peking concerned the supply by China of complete industrial plant equipment. Two related protocols covered the conditions governing its delivery, and the treatment and working conditions of the Chinese engineering and technical personnel to be stationed in Rumania in connexion with setting up the plants in question.

[11] Hsinhua, 9 June 1970.

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joined the Chinese camp',[12] it is clear that the visit was interpreted in Moscow as an indication that events were approaching the point of no return. The fact that Ceausescu's visit was followed some days later by a visit to Peking by Yugoslav Foreign Minister Tepavac apparently convinced the Soviets of the need for a more rigorous policy to avoid a shift in the balance of power in the Balkans. Moreover the dramatic announcement less than a month after the Ceausescu and Tepavac visits that President Nixon also intended to visit Peking seemed to threaten that what had begun as a regional challenge might well take on international proportions.

In the weeks following Ceausescu's Peking visit several East European papers attacked China openly and Rumania implicitly.[13] The *Nervenkrieg* began in earnest, however, after the convocation of the Crimean conference of Warsaw Pact members—excluding Rumania—on August 2. The conference took place amid rumours that Chou En-lai would visit both Yugoslavia and Rumania sometime in the autumn. Subsequent events seem to indicate that a deliberate decision to embark upon a concerted campaign to warn Rumania of the dangers of its present course was taken at the conference. Soon after the Crimean conference the Hungarian paper *Magyar Hirlap* charged that Chinese diplomacy in the Balkans had an anti-Soviet edge and warned of the emergence of a 'Tirana-Belgrade-Bucharest axis' supported by Peking.[14] The most blunt warning however came from the Slovak daily *Smena*:

> A shift on the part of the Rumanian leadership to the Chinese platform . . . as can be judged from the communiqué issued at the end of the visit of the Rumanian Socialist Republic's delegation to Peking and from the course of the visit itself—would mean a deviation from the principle of proletarian internationalism.[15]

The Soviet Union itself did not engage in any direct attacks on Rumania, but remained behind the scenes concentrating its hostility on China instead. However, given Rumania's attitude towards, and increasing ties with, China, direct criticism of China was implicit criticism of Rum-

[12] *Quarterly Economic Review* No. 4, 1971, The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd. (London).

[13] The opening shot in the campaign was fired by Hungarian Politburo member Zoltan Komocsin who noted 'differences which exist in Rumanian and Hungarian attitudes on matters of principle and on certain international issues'. See *Nepszabadsag* and *Magyar Hirlap*, 25 June 1971. For the Rumanian response see presidium member Paul Niculescu-Mizil's rejoinder to Komocsin in *Scanteia*, 9 July 1971. For other attacks see *Nepszabadsag* (July 18) which criticized China and by implication Rumania. This was followed several days later by a sharply worded warning in the Slovak paper *Smena* that 'some socialist countries seem to agree with Mao's policy' despite the 'unnecessary trouble' caused by the 'disruptive policy' of the Chinese leadership. On July 31, *Rude Pravo* tacitly took issue with the Rumanian contention (apparently supported by the Chinese) that small nations have a specific, independent role to play in international relations.

[14] *Magyar Hirlap*, 13 August 1971.

[15] *Smena*, 17 August 1971. An earlier *Smena* article (11 August) noted that Rumania's absence from the Crimean meeting was 'not a contribution towards the development of our [i.e. the socialist community's] concord and strength' and warned that this 'policy of walking a tightrope will be paid for sooner or later'.

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ania.[16] By attacking China the Soviet Union sought to discredit the Rumanian claim of seeking 'good relations with all socialist states' and to show that this policy was in fact working against the unity of the socialist camp. At the same time, Warsaw Pact manoeuvres were held in southern Hungary and rumours circulated that further manoeuvres would be held in Bulgaria.[17]

While after the meeting between Foreign Ambassador Drozdenko and Ceausescu (18 August 1970) the campaign subsided,[18] it nonetheless dramatized the Soviet desire to reassert its paramountcy and prevent the further drift of Rumania out of the Soviet orbit. To the extent that the campaign was conducted to serve notice of the Kremlin's limits of tolerance, it was successful. Having had their calculations of Soviet policy once upset in August 1968, the Rumanians, militarily weak and exposed, were not about to push their luck. Since the *Nervenkrieg* a fragile equilibrium has emerged in which continued collaboration with Yugoslavia has been offset by an effort to remove the strain in relations with Hungary which has existed since the outbreak of polemics in the summer of 1970.[19]

Yugoslavia

At one point the Soviet Union might have been willing to write Yugoslavia off as a lost cause but the approach of the post-Tito[20] era has thrust Yugoslavia back into the forefront of Soviet policy. Soviet interest in Yugoslavia has been accentuated by the sense of permanent crisis—or as one analyst of the Yugoslav scene has termed it, 'barely controlled chaos'[21]—which has beset the Yugoslav system in the last few years and

[16] See, for instance, *Novoye Vremya*, 13 August 1971. *Za Rubezhom* (21 August 1971) claimed that the aim of Chinese policy was 'the formation of a bloc to which certain socialist and developing countries, and even capitalist states, will be attached'.

[17] The plans for the joint Bulgarian-Soviet manoeuvres were never officially announced, but unconfirmed reports indicated that manoeuvres involving three Soviet divisions and two Bulgarian divisions had been planned for 1 August, but were postponed first until 15 August and later indefinitely. See *International Herald Tribune*, 26 August 1971.

[18] While initially neither side moved substantially away from its carved-out position, there were signs on both sides of an effort to reduce the tension. The Soviet Union abandoned rumoured plans for joint military manoeuvres in Bulgaria. For their part the Rumanians gave a prominent place at the top of the front page to a meeting between Ceausescu and Soviet Vice-Premier Mikhail A. Lesechko and described the meeting as 'warm and comradely'—a substantial improvement over the tone of the Drozdenko-Ceausescu meeting the week before, which had been termed simply 'comradely'.

[19] A meeting between Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter and his Rumanian counterpart Corneliu Manescu in Bucharest (20–23 November 1971) followed an earlier visit to Budapest by Rumanian party secretaries Paul Niculescu-Mizil and Manea Manescu. The visit by Corneliu Manescu may well have been designed as a prelude to a visit to Rumania by Kadar (24–26 February 1971) to sign a long-overdue treaty of friendship.

[20] Provisions for a transition to an institutionalized collective leadership to replace Tito have already been incorporated into the new Constitution approved on 30 June 1971, and barring death, Tito will retire from the Presidency in 1976.

[21] Paul Shoup, 'Evolution of a System', *Problems of Communism* (July/August/September/October 1969), p. 68.

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which reached its climax with the student strike in Croatia in November–December 1971. The strike—the most serious crisis faced by Yugoslavia since the Stalin-Tito break [22]—has raised the prospect that any future instability arising from nationality tensions could be exploited by the Kremlin to pressure Yugoslavia into abandoning its policy of non-alignment and rejoining the Soviet camp.

The Soviet Union, however, has been confronted in Yugoslavia with a more assertive Chinese diplomacy. The Chinese challenge began in the wake of the Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia [23] and paralleled Peking's *rapprochement* with Bucharest. Two of the first manifestations of this effort on the part of Peking to improve relations with Yugoslavia were a trade agreement in the spring of 1969 and—notably—the decision to exchange ambassadors in early 1970.

The turning-point in Chinese-Yugoslav relations was the visit of Yugoslav Foreign Minister Tepavac to China in June 1971. The Tepavac visit—which followed a visit to Peking by Ceausescu by only a few days—was the first apearance in China of a Yugoslav minister since Yugoslavia recognized China in 1949. Moreover the Yugoslavs publicly stated that the visit was 'not in the least of a routine character' and that a 'further broadening of contacts could reasonably be envisioned in the forthcoming period'. [24]

The visit itself represented a major reversal of Chinese policy and an example *par excellence* of the subordination of ideology to *Realpolitik*. The Mao regime had now decided to give a cordial reception to the same 'Tito clique' which for a decade had been regarded in Peking as the archvillains of the communist movement, responsible for the disintegration of communist unity. Furthermore, the visit, occurring as it did back to back with Ceausescu's Peking visit, took place at a moment of growing deterioration in Soviet-Yugoslav relations, highlighted by Tito's refusal to attend the Soviet 24th Party Congress in person.[25]

The campaign in the East European media against China and Rumania was viewed as an attempt by the Soviet Union to pressure the Yugoslavs as well. Without mentioning names Tito warned on more than one occasion of intensified outside pressure from 'foreign enemies'.[26] The Yugoslavs took particular offence at criticism regarding

[22] The Belgrade daily *Vecernje Novosti* in its 9 December editorial was even more emphatic: 'There is no doubt that the League of Communists of Yugoslavia is passing through what is perhaps its most serious crisis in its 50-year history.'

[23] At the time of the Soviet intervention China offered 'support'—the nature of which was unspecified—in case of a Soviet intervention. See *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 4 June 1971.

[24] *International Affairs*, Vol. 21, Belgrade, 5 June 1971.

[25] Among the other signs of the deterioration of relations immediately prior to the Tepavac visit to Peking were reports that the Soviet Union was supporting the Croatian separatists, and Yugoslav chagrin over Soviet-inspired attacks against Yugoslavia by pro-Soviet Yugoslav *émigrés* within the USSR. For the polemics see *Nedelyne Information Novine* (NIN), 13 June 1971; *Politika*, 11 and 20 June 1971; and *Izvestia*, 18 June 1971.

[26] Lajos Lederer, *The Observer* (London), 27 June 1971; UPI, 5 September 1971.

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rapprochement with China. As one Yugoslav commentator bluntly put it: 'Yugoslavia needs no advice on how to behave.'[27] Moreover the Yugoslavs left no doubt that they regarded the criticism as 'not well intentioned' and little more than a cover for the USSR's desire 'to impose its own presence in the Balkans under the pretext of suppressing China's presence there'.[28] The flare-up of the Macedonian polemics[29] between Yugoslavia and Bulgaria—usually a reliable barometer of Soviet-Yugoslav relations—served as a Soviet reminder to the Yugoslavs of their vulnerability to pressure from without as well as from within (i.e. of the fragility of the multinational state beset by increased nationality tensions).

The 'unofficial' visit of Soviet party leader Leonid Brezhnev (22–25 September 1971) has proved to be at least a temporary watershed in relations with Yugoslavia. Brezhnev's confirmation of the validity of both the 1955 Belgrade Declaration and the 1956 Moscow Declaration[30] has served to relieve a great deal of the Yugoslav anxiety which had arisen as a result of the Soviet-inspired campaign against Rumania as well as the revival of the Macedonian polemics.[31] Most significant, however, was Brezhnev's repudiation of the 'theory of limited sovereignty'—the so-called Brezhnev Doctrine—as a 'slanderous invention' of 'various forces'.[32] Brezhnev's repudiation of the doctrine, however, went hand-in-hand with a reference to Soviet internationalist policy and its 'responsibility' in the struggle for socialism and communism. Moreover, his remark that the 1955 Belgrade Declaration and the 1956 Moscow Declaration must be interpreted 'under contemporary conditions'[33] seems to have placed a limitation on Soviet support for the principles contained in the two documents which has not escaped Yugoslav attention.[34]

The Brezhnev visit to Belgrade was followed by several other indications that Moscow desired to remove the strains in Soviet-Yugoslav relations. The most important of these signals was the abatement of the polemics over Macedonia—apparently as a result of Soviet pressure on

[27] Milika Sundic, Radio Zagreb, 6 September 1971.
[28] Radio Zagreb, 6 September 1971.
[29] See *Vjesnik*, Zagreb, October 7; *Vecernje Novosti*, 11 October 1971. Relations reached a new low with the appearance of a leading article in the Skoplje daily *Nova Makedonia* of October 31 entitled 'The Dead Star of San Stefano', which attacked the current Bulgarian policy towards Macedonia and characterized it as 'overt territorial and other aspirations' based on the 'most conservative and most brutal greater Bulgarian chauvinistic indoctrination'.
[30] The 1955 Belgrade Declaration pledged non-interference in Yugoslav internal affairs. The 1956 Moscow Declaration, signed by Tito and the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, affirmed the right of every communist state to an independent development.
[31] Tanjug, 22 September 1971.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] See for instance the comment by Milika Sundic that the Yugoslavs were 'unable to decipher what contemporary conditions are meant' and that the two documents are 'equally important today and in the future, as they were yesterday and the day before yesterday' (Radio Zagreb, 23 September 1971).

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the Bulgarians.[35] One of the first signs of such pressure was the dismissal of Boris Krumov, editor of *Anteni*, a Bulgarian magazine which had published an anti-Yugoslav poem by a Yugoslav *émigré*, for 'activities incompatible with the foreign policy line of the Central Committee'. Shortly thereafter a 'long and friendly' talk between Bulgarian Premier Stanko Todorov and Yugoslav Ambassador to Bulgaria Ante Drnic took place.[36] Finally, and most importantly, the Bulgarians signed a tourist protocol with Yugoslavia in the Macedonian language.[37] This represented a major concession on the part of the Bulgarians, who since 1966 had refused to sign documents presented in Macedonian on the grounds that this would imply recognition of a separate Macedonian nationality. Yet while such concessions, together with Brezhnev's Belgrade statements, have done much to assuage immediate Yugoslav anxiety and partially removed some of the strains on Soviet-Yugoslav relations, they have by no means led to a far-reaching *rapprochement* or lured Yugoslavia back into the Soviet orbit.[38]

Bulgaria

The changing Soviet perspective on the Balkans has also increased Soviet interest in maintaining Bulgaria as a reliable outpost of Soviet influence in that region. Thus the USSR has sought to bind Bulgaria even closer by means of a policy of closer integration with the Soviet economy. This policy of closer integration of the two economies was first announced by Todor Zhivkov at the July 1968 Central Committee plenum[39] and later amplified at the September 1969 plenum when Zhivkov noted that Bulgaria intended to 'move gradually towards joint planning in a number of branches' with the Soviet Union.[40] The closer integration has been formalized in a series of sweeping economic agreements signed in May 1969, August 1970, and November 1970. By 1975 trade with the USSR is expected to account for 68 per cent of Bulgaria's

[35] At the time of the Brezhnev visit there was speculation that Tito had in all probability broached the Macedonian issue and asked Brezhnev to use Soviet influence in Sofia to remove, or at least reduce, the tension. On his return to Moscow from Belgrade Brezhnev made a stopover in Sofia at which time he may well have informed Zhivkov of a new direction in Soviet policy.

[36] Radio Belgrade, 5 November 1971.

[37] Tanjug and Radio Belgrade, 5 November 1971, both reported the agreement as being signed in Macedonian and Bulgarian; *Politika* and *Nova Makedonia* reported only the signing of the protocol, not that it had been signed in Macedonian. This may possibly be related to an agreement by the Yugoslavs to play down the Bulgarian concession, or, however unlikely, to a reporter's error.

[38] The repetition of Soviet claims in the new fourth edition of the Soviet party history that the Yugoslav party was responsible for differences which led to the Stalin-Tito break drew a blast from the Yugoslavs who noted that 'nothing has changed in the general policy of the Soviet Union towards our self-management style of socialism and that there are no prospects for such a change in the near future either, despite documents which we signed with the Soviet Union in 1955' (Radio Zagreb, 17 November 1971). See also comments by Janez Stanic in *Ljubljana Delo* (27 December 1971), where he noted a lack of clarity in the Brezhnev visit.

[39] See his speech to the plenum, *Rabotnichesko Delo*, 25 July 1968.

[40] *Rabotnichesko Delo*, 27 September 1969.

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foreign trade and the latest agreement provides that over the next five years Bulgarian-Soviet goods turnover will be 60 per cent higher than in 1966–70.[41]

The degree to which this policy of integration has been carried out is evident in the fact that it has been formally written into the Draft Programme of the BCP approved at the 10th party congress in April 1971. The programme stressed:

> The cornerstone of the domestic and foreign policies of the Bulgarian Communist Party continues to be fraternal friendship and cooperation with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the *ever wider and deeper bringing closer together of Bulgaria and the Soviet Union*[42] [author's italics].

Just as Albania can be regarded as a Chinese Trojan horse in the Balkans, Bulgaria has acted in a similar role vis-à-vis the USSR. Except for a brief period following Khrushchev's ouster, it has been a faithful mouthpiece for Soviet policy and thus it is not surprising that over the last several years Bulgaria has embarked upon a campaign to improve relations with all neighbours and foster a 'climate of Balkan cooperation'. This campaign has included the signing of a new 20-year treaty of friendship, cooperation, and mutual aid with Rumania; a visit by Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demiral, which resulted in the signing of a consular agreement[43] and a further expansion of cultural exchanges[44]; and the normalization of relations with Albania.[45]

Perhaps most noteworthy of all has been the continual improvement of relations with Greece since the visit of the late Bulgarian Foreign Minister, Bashev, to Athens in May 1970—despite the staunch anti-communist rhetoric of the Greek regime. The aims of this *rapprochement* have been underscored by the prospect of a new eight-point plan more comprehensive than anything yet put forward by a communist country to Greece. One of the eight points included in the plan was a proposal for transit facilities for Bulgarian goods in the Greek port of Salonika. Such a proposal would serve to give Bulgaria a long-sought outlet into the Aegean Sea and would increase the Soviet Union's influence by

41 By way of comparison, this means that the volume of goods to be exchanged by the two countries is expected to be more than the total volume of goods turnover for the past two five-year plans put together. See interview with former Minister of Foreign Trade Lachezar Avramov, BTA, 5 November 1970.

42 BTA, 13 March 1971.

43 Ibid. 19 November 1970.

44 Significantly, upon the conclusion of Demiral's visit, *Rabotnichesko Delo* (11 October 1970) noted that Bulgarian-Turkish cooperation had 'a much broader significance' than bilateral political development; it was a 'real contribution to the creation of a better political climate in the Balkans *and Europe*' (emphasis added) —a hint that the motivation for Bulgaria's policy transcended the country's own immediate desires.

45 On 15 November 1970 the two countries agreed upon a normalization of relations at *chargé d'affaires* level. (Since the mutual expulsion of diplomats from Tirana and Sofia in July 1968, the two countries had had no diplomatic relations even at a low level.) The normalization of relations was followed by the signing of a Bulgarian-Albanian trade accord.

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proxy in a region that is becoming more important as Soviet naval power increases.

The degree to which Bulgaria may be acting as a Soviet Trojan horse in the Balkans is illustrated by its unusual silence during the course of the polemics against Rumania. Normally Bulgaria is the most obedient and vociferous of Kremlin spokesmen, but to have joined in the polemics against Rumania would undoubtedly have undone much of the good will built up over the last 18 months and called into question the sincerity of Sofia's Balkan policy. It seems plausible, therefore, that the Soviets, as well as the Bulgarians themselves, felt it wisest to leave the polemics to others (such as the Czechoslovaks and Hungarians), and by so doing avoid endangering or discrediting the fragile *rapprochement* of the last year and a half.

Soviet Policy and Multilateral Cooperation in the Balkans

In the last few years considerable attention has been focused on calls for Balkan cooperation, largely as a result of Rumanian initiative. Rumanian interest first manifested itself as far back as 1957 when Premier Chivu Stoica, in the spirit of Khrushchev's decision to seek limited *détente* with the West, addressed messages to Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia proposing a conference aimed at Balkan *détente*.[46] The recent Rumanian revival of similar proposals, however, has been aimed at preventing Rumania's isolation and offsetting Soviet influence.[47] Paradoxically the same theme of regional cooperation has been seized upon by Moscow, which according to a recent commentary is 'directly interested in turning the Balkan peninsula into a zone of peace and cooperation'.[48]

In the past the Soviet position on Balkan cooperation has fluctuated depending on whether such calls served wider Soviet policy objectives. Thus in the late 1940s Stalin quashed calls for a Danubian federation and proposed instead a Bulgarian-Yugoslav federation which he hoped would make Yugoslavia more amenable to Soviet pressure.[49] Under

[46] For the texts of the Rumanian proposals see *Scanteia*, 17 September 1957 and 7 June 1959.

[47] At the time of Turkish President Sunay's visit to Rumania in April 1970 a Rumanian commentary noted that 'The proposals put forward by the Rumanian government in 1957 and 1959 for converting the Balkans into a zone of peace, free of nuclear weapons [are] proposals which have retained full validity' (Agerpres, 11 April 1970). Then in May 1970 Rumania sent notes to other Balkan states suggesting multilateral conferences and increased cooperation and in June of the same year a note was sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations calling for the Balkans to be turned into 'a zone of peace, peaceful existence, into a region free of nuclear weapons' (Agerpres, 13 June 1970).

[48] Vladimir Ilyn, Radio Moscow, 23 December 1971. A paragraph in Article 6 of the Rumanian-Soviet Treaty, signed on 7 July 1970, also makes specific reference to the desire of both countries 'to establish good-neighbourly relations and develop mutual understanding and cooperation in the Balkan peninsula and Black Sea region'.

[49] When Bulgarian communist leader and former head of the Comintern Georgi Dimitrov was so indiscreet as to disclose plans for the creation of a 'Danubian Federation' (including a customs union) at a press conference in January 1948 without first clearing the idea with Stalin, he was rudely rebuked. A *Pravda*

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Khrushchev the 'Stoica notes' formed part of a 'peace offensive' by the then Soviet allies Rumania, Albania, and Bulgaria which was designed to put pressure on the Turkish and Greek governments. The first note, which was sent by Rumania in September 1957, called for a summit meeting to improve Balkan relations. Revivals of this call in June 1959 —this time accompanied by a proposal to ban all rocket bases and nuclear weapons—came in the wake of Khrushchev's denunciation of the Greek-Turkish agreement to the installation of NATO rockets on their territories and were linked to the Soviet desire to neutralize or at least prevent an increase of NATO's strength in the Mediterranean.

Now, as in the past, the Soviet Union has sought to mould the concept of Balkan *détente* to fit its wider interests. Thus in the recent revival of the calls for Balkan cooperation, Moscow has sought to achieve three goals. The calls for Balkan *détente* have served as:

(1) A regional corollary to the general policy of *détente* being pursued in Europe;
(2) An attempt to weaken NATO, especially on the crucial southern flank;
(3) A part of an overall policy of consolidating control, both in Eastern Europe, and especially the Balkans.

The Soviet Union apparently hopes to gain some propaganda value by calls for Balkan *détente*, especially at a time when preparation for the convocation of a European security conference is taking on more importance in its policy. At the same time its strategic interests would be well served should such calls lead to a further loosening of NATO ties with Greece and Turkey.

IT is no accident that concurrently with the Soviet build-up in the Middle East there has occurred a conscious effort to woo Turkey, whose control of the Dardanelles allows access to the Mediterranean and thus to the Middle East itself. Beginning with the visit of Turkish Foreign Minister Feridan Cemal Erkin to Moscow in 1964—the turning-point in Turkish-Soviet relations—the Soviet Union has tried to exploit rising anti-American feeling as well as Turkey's recent difficulties in obtaining large amounts of aid from the West, and thus gradually improve its relations with Turkey. Behind the Soviet policy of *rapprochement* has been the desire to loosen Turkey's ties to NATO by stressing not only the good will of the Soviet Union itself but the dangers which the NATO alliance entails.[50] It is noteworthy that at the time of President Sunay's visit to Moscow in November 1969, Podgorny himself

editorial appeared shortly afterwards declaring that there was no need for a 'problematical and artificial confederation or a customs union' (*Pravda*, 28 January 1948). For a view of Stalin's personal attitude and behaviour regarding the episode, see Milovan Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (1962), pp. 175–76.

[50] Thus at the time of US Secretary of Defence Laird's visit to Turkey in October 1970, the Soviet press warned that Turkey's ties might cause it to be 'drawn into adventures undertaken by aggressive imperialist circles in spite of itself and contrary to its national interests'. See TASS, 13 October 1970.

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raised the issue of a nuclear-free zone in the Mediterranean—well before the recent Balkan offensive.

The Soviet Union has also sought to take advantage of the growing diplomatic isolation caused by West European antipathy to the military dictatorship in Greece. Thus the Soviet Union became the first major nation—East or West—to send an ambassador to Athens after the coup. Moreover, Greece itself, despite the staunch anti-communist rhetoric of the colonels, has sought to increase its trade with the East, in no small part because political opposition in Western Europe has damaged its trade balance.[51] In January 1970 the Soviet Union was in fact granted 'most-favoured-nation' status by Greece—a goal denied it even under the liberal Papandreou government. Significantly, the Soviet Union has devoted the bulk of its criticism not to the anti-democratic military dictatorship, but to Greece's position in NATO, in an attempt to portray Greece as a pawn used by NATO to carry out an imperialistic policy.[52]

One may also see in Bulgarian encouragement and support for Balkan cooperation on a multilateral level a reflection of Soviet policy goals, even though such calls have given Bulgaria the semblance of conducting an independent foreign policy. One of the early signs of the new Bulgarian focus on multilateral cooperation was the appearance of an article in *Otechestven Front* on 16 July 1970 which backed the Rumanian proposal to turn the Balkans into a 'zone of peace', and advocated 'comprehensive Balkan meetings at various levels to discuss topical and more lasting questions of intra-Balkan relations, which would promote a still greater improvement of the political climate in the Balkans'.[53] Since then the Bulgarians have raised the issue on several occasions.[54] The extent to which Bulgaria's calls for multilateral cooperation are subject to Moscow's whim, however, was well illustrated by the apparent quashing of a Bulgarian overture advocating the convocation of a Balkan security conference in the spring of 1971.[55]

[51] See UPI, 12 May 1970.

[52] Thus Laird's visit to Greece was termed 'a new link in the chain of US war preparations in the Middle East' (see TASS, 2 October 1970), and the recent agreement for establishing home-port facilities in Piraeus for the US Sixth Fleet was portrayed as an attempt on the part of the US to turn Greece 'into a reliable springboard for its adventurous policy' in the Mediterranean region (*Izvestia*, 12 February 1972). See also D. Dimoyannis, 'Greece—A NATO Outpost', *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 4, April 1969, and V. Popov, 'Greece and NATO's Strategic Plans', *International Affairs* (Moscow), No. 12, December 1970.

[53] BTA, 16 July 1970.

[54] Zhivkov backed the idea in his speech to the 10th party congress in April 1971 (BTA, 20 April 1971), and in a speech on 25 June 1971 (Radio Sofia, 25 June 1971). A joint Bulgarian-Rumanian communiqué following a meeting between Bulgarian Foreign Minister Bashev and his Rumanian counterpart Corneliu Manescu in June also advocated turning the Balkans into a 'nuclear-free zone of good neighbourliness and security'. (See UPI, 8 June 1971.)

[55] Speculation regarding the Soviet role was stimulated by the appearance of a paragraph in certain versions of the text of Zhivkov's April 20 speech to the Bulgarian 10th party congress calling for a 'meeting of government representatives or leaders of Balkan states' and for a 'common declaration by the Balkan countries'. The paragraph appeared in the Spanish and German texts of the draft of Zhivkov's speech—apparently through an oversight—but was missing in the Russian, French,

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Prospects for the Future

Events since the Brezhnev visit to Belgrade indicate that the Kremlin has embarked upon a 'peace offensive' of which the relaxation in Balkan tension has formed but a small part. This peace offensive in Europe—highlighted by Brezhnev's visit to France in October 1971, Kosygin's visit to Scandinavia in December of the same year, and (most importantly) the signing of the Berlin Agreement—seems linked to preparing the ground for the convocation of a conference on European security. The fundamental question remains, however, whether the relaxation in tension in the Balkans represents a shift in Soviet policy or simply a change in atmospherics. Despite the stabilization that has occurred, it is clear that deep-seated differences of long-standing duration exist between the Soviet Union on the one hand and Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Albania on the other.

An important distinction ought to be made here between the situation in Rumania and that in Yugoslavia. While resistance to Soviet hegemony has led both countries to seek closer relations with China and driven them into what can only be viewed as an informal alliance with one another, the fact remains that Rumania is a member of the Warsaw Pact and Yugoslavia is not. Thus any military intervention in Yugoslavia would be an attempt to change a status quo that has been formalized over the past 20 years, while an invasion of Rumania, reprehensible though it would be, would still be an action to preserve—not alter—the status quo.

Moreover, despite the intensity of the *Nervenkrieg* conducted by the Soviet Union, the temptation to see in Rumania another Czechoslovakia should be resisted. The dynamics of the two challenges are quite different. Rumania does not border on the Federal Republic of Germany; it does not have a strong tradition of close historical ties with the West; the leading role of the party is not threatened; and Ceausescu has a firm hand on domestic forces—all of which factors present a sharp contrast to the state of affairs in the 1968 Prague Spring under Dubcek.

While the Soviets have probably never excluded military intervention in Rumania, they undoubtedly preferred, and would still prefer, a less drastic method of bringing Rumania to heel where possible. The Soviet Union has invested a great deal more in its European policy in the two and a half years since the Czechoslovak events. Armed intervention would have serious consequences for this European policy—delaying, if not destroying, prospects for the convocation of a security conference, as well as calling into question the efficacy of the signing of the Berlin Agreement and the ratification of the treaty with the Federal Republic of Germany, and an agreement on arms limitation

English, and Bulgarian texts. Moreover, Zhivkov did not include it in his actual address to the congress. Moscow may well have felt such an initiative should be postponed until after the convocation of an all-European security conference. See Carl Buchalla, *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 April 1971.

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(SALT). This the Soviets might have been—and might still be—willing to suffer, but only if the danger elsewhere seemed exceedingly great.

An attempt to unseat Ceausescu would be more to the Soviets' liking and a more realistic possibility. There is some evidence, albeit somewhat circumstantial, that the Kremlin has in fact sought to encourage or at best exploit opposition to Ceausescu. Unconfirmed reports have circulated that a Rumanian general, Ion Serb, was executed 'for passing information regarding Rumanian defences to the Soviets'.[56] The view that Serb may have been involved in some sort of oppositional activity is given all the more credibility by indications of a major shake-up in the Rumanian military and security forces.[57]

The exact reasons for the shake-up are at present impossible to ascertain but it does seem plausible that in the wake of the Serb affair, Ceausescu feared the growth of pro-Soviet sentiment among the army and security forces which traditionally have closer links with their counterparts in the Soviet Union than do the political leaders, and was therefore moved to reorganize the army and security forces in order to prevent any challenge. The degree of Soviet involvement is not known but any attempted coup would obviously have received their support, if in fact it were not inspired by them.

This Soviet pressure, as well as internal difficulties in part arising out of foreign policy considerations, may well explain the tightening in the ideological sphere which has taken place since July 1971. On July 6, two weeks after his return from China, Ceausescu presented the RCP Central Committee with 17 theses calling for the intensification and strengthening of ideological, cultural, and educational activity along Marxist lines.[58] The campaign may have been undertaken in the hope of placating the Soviet Union while at the same time strengthening Ceausescu's own control over the party. At a time of crisis—when Rumania was under Soviet pressure—and with the example in mind of Czechoslovakia (where the Czech and Slovak writers were instrumental in the toppling of Novotny), Ceausescu probably felt a particular need to ensure firm control and discipline both in the party and in society at large. In line with this emphasis on security is the passing of a new law on the 'Protection of State Secrets'. Besides discouraging contact with foreigners, the law provides for heavy penalties for the publication of private official information, especially that related to industrial statistics.[59].

[56] AP, 14 February 1972. The Rumanian embassy in Vienna refused to comment on reports of Serb's execution but did admit 'he is no longer a general' (UPI, 17 February 1972).

[57] In late January 1972, Vasile Patilinet was released from his position as party secretary in charge of defence and security matters and Mihal Burca, Deputy Minister of Defence since 1958, was appointed chairman of the Red Cross Society—obviously a demotion. For a detailed analysis of these changes, see Robert King, 'Rumanian Difficulties in Military and Security Affairs', Rumanian Background Report/6, *Radio Free Europe Research* (EERA), 6 March 1972.

[58] *Scanteia*, 7 July 1971.

[59] See *Scanteia*, 18 December 1971, for the text of the law and *Le Monde*, 16 February 1972, for a discussion of the provisions.

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Nonetheless, despite a degree of opposition among writers and artists generated by the ' mini-cultural revolution ', and despite the as yet unexplained ' Serb affair ' and reasons for the reorganization of security and military forces, Ceausescu seems to have consolidated his position to the point where it is highly unlikely that anyone could mount a successful challenge to him in the not-too-distant future. He has continued to shift many members of the top leadership who might be considered as contenders for power. The latest examples of such shifts came after the April 1972 plenum when Paul Niculescu-Mizil—a Ceausescu protegé considered to be the number three man in the Rumanian hierarchy—was transferred from the post of CC secretary in charge of inter-party relations to the vice-chairmanship of the Council of Ministers.

IT is hardly likely, however, that Soviet concern with Rumania will diminish. That it has continued, though in more subtle form, after the subsiding of overt polemics is evident in the publication of a report delivered to a closed session of the Central Committee of the CPCS (held on 21 October 1971) by Vasil Bilak, a member of both the secretariat and presidium known for his pro-Soviet sentiments. Bilak criticized the Rumanian position regarding the Czechoslovak invasion and noted that ' despite great efforts and great patience ', the CPCS ' has been unable to find a common language with the Rumanians '. Bilak also accused the Rumanians of setting the national interests of Rumania above the international obligations that result from membership in the socialist community:

> Everything that is national is assessed with little criticism and is made an object of praise, whether it be the history of Rumania, literary works, or art in general. . . . Even if we show the greatest possible understanding and tolerate certain specific attitudes—although they remain incomprehensible to us—we cannot close our eyes to the fact that in its foreign policy the leadership of the Rumanian party adopts an attitude that is against the interests of the socialist community and against the interests of the Rumanian people.[60]

In fact, given Rumania's previous relation to China, as well as the other differences of opinion that have emerged during the last decade over a variety of issues, it can be argued that the Soviet Union is likely to be even more concerned with Rumania as it anxiously watches the results of the Nixon visit to China. Thus one can expect that however secure Ceausescu's present position may be, he will have to wage a complex battle to sustain and extend his power internally and walk a dangerous tightrope externally to maintain the precarious balance in foreign policy he has so far managed to achieve. For the time being an uneasy truce seems to have emerged as the Soviets await the results of the Nixon

[60] *Le Monde*, 12 February 1972.

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visits to Peking and Moscow. In the long run, however, it is likely that if Rumania strays too far, they will opt for a policy of graduated pressure combined with an effort to isolate that country and coax it back into the Soviet fold.

In regard to Yugoslavia the Soviets are undoubtedly already looking forward to the post-Tito era and hope that a Yugoslavia devoid of his unifying personality will revert to the political instability of the inter-war years and thus become more amenable to Soviet pressure and influence. At present therefore it serves Moscow's best interest to pursue a waiting policy, alternating pressure (such as intrigue with Croatian nationalists, revival of the Macedonian polemics, and contact with pro-Soviet groups in the Yugoslav bureaucracy) with conciliatory gestures such as those implicit in Brezhnev's visit.

In the long run, however, it is likely that the Soviets are less interested in a breakup of Yugoslavia—as some commentators have recently suggested [61]—than in a weak unified Yugoslavia. A breakup of the Yugoslav state would threaten to unleash a civil war, risk Great Power intervention and ultimately endanger peace in Europe, while a weak but unified Yugoslav state would mean a less obstreperous Yugoslavia, one of necessity more closely allied with Soviet foreign policy goals and one which would probably give the Soviets the use of port facilities in the Adriatic.[62] Moreover it would result in the further isolation of Rumania, as well as the discrediting and removal of an important alternative model of socialism.

This also means that the Soviet interest in maintaining Bulgaria as an obedient and reliable ally is bound to increase. Moscow therefore can be expected to attempt to strengthen its political and economic control over Bulgaria. In this regard the USSR undoubtedly has reason for not wishing to see the Macedonian issue entirely liquidated. The ability to resurrect that question sometime in the future—once Tito has left the scene—is an important asset which the Kremlin probably does not wish to bargain away completely at the present time. For the moment the polemics have become secondary to improved Soviet-Yugoslav relations and the Soviet desire to promote an atmosphere of *détente* in preparation for the convocation of a European security conference, but this could easily change in the future.

THUS as the Soviet Union surveys the Balkan scene in the light of recent events it has cause for a fair degree of satisfaction. The retrenchment on the domestic front in Rumania as a result of the

[61] See, for instance, Walter Guenzel, 'Jugoslawien in der Zerreissprobe', *Die Welt*, 15 December 1971 and also *The New York Times* editorial of 23 December 1971.

[62] See the article by Evans and Novak (*Washington Post*, 30 January 1972) which speaks of 'rising pressure from Moscow on Yugoslavia's President Tito for Soviet port facilities at Kotor'. According to a 'confidential diplomatic report' cited by the authors, Brezhnev allegedly put pressure on Tito during the September 1971 meeting of the two leaders in Belgrade to reverse the process of decentralization and to give the Soviet Union supply rights at Kotor.

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so-called 'mini-cultural revolution' has ensured that Rumania remains strongly orthodox internally (*i.e.* that the role of the party as the leading force in society has been strengthened). Moreover the Moscow Summit, in contributing to improved US-Soviet relations, seemed to indicate a tacit willingness on the part of the US to give Moscow a freer hand in Eastern Europe and thus to diminish whatever degree of support the Rumanians might have expected from the US should the Rumanian-Soviet conflict escalate.

The situation in Yugoslavia must seem to many in Moscow as holding out no less promise. The student strike in Croatia in December 1971 has demonstrated anew the depth and seriousness of nationality conflicts as well as the fragility of the multinational state. While Tito's arrest of the student leaders and removal of the top leadership in the Croatian party may well have smothered some of the repercussions from the disruptions, it has done little to remove the underlying causes of the strike, which involve more fundamental questions of economic and administrative policy, as well as deep-seated historical antagonisms. These seem likely to resurface, if not increase, once Tito departs from the scene, as Moscow is well aware.[63] Moreover, for the moment the strike has sparked a new call for strengthening the role of the party[64] and has given the pro-Soviet forces within Yugoslavia more leverage—two points which can only be greeted with satisfaction in Moscow.

The situation elsewhere in the Balkans also gives Moscow reason for satisfaction. Bulgaria remains a faithful ally, only too willing to allow its foreign policy to be used for Soviet ends. Turkey, while not abandoning its membership in NATO, has nonetheless displayed increased uncertainty regarding the American commitment and a readiness to seek some accommodation with the USSR. Moreover its continuing political instability has demonstrated that Turkey is far from achieving a viable political system. Against this background Moscow may well hope to be able to exploit domestic weakness to achieve foreign policy goals.

Greece, despite the strong anti-communist rhetoric of the colonels, has shown itself ready to sacrifice ideology to *Realpolitik*, both in its relations with Bulgaria as well as with the Soviet Union. This trend could increase if West European antipathy to the Greek regime contributes to that country's further isolation from the European community. Moreover Greece remains a country with a tradition of volatile politics, and Moscow may well hope that any new crisis could be exploited to its advantage. Lastly, while the Soviet Union has had little success in improving relations with Albania, Enver Hoxha is 63 and Moscow may feel that a new leadership may be more ready to compromise. All this —and an ageing Mao—undoubtedly gives Moscow reason for hope.

[63] As Milovan Djilas has aptly noted: 'The thrust has been contained but the Croatian and other problems of the system are not settled'. See his interview in *Le Monde*, 29 December 1971.

[64] See Tito's speech to the second conference of the Yugoslav party, 25–27 January 1972.

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AGAINST this must be weighed the increased diplomatic assertiveness of China. While the mystery surrounding the recent demise of Lin Piao underscores the problem of political prediction regarding Chinese policy, nonetheless several points should be mentioned in conclusion. The first is that Chinese interest in the Balkans—particularly Rumania—is, and is likely to remain, a function of the Sino-Soviet rivalry. To a large extent Chinese actions in the Balkans have been a counterattack aimed at offsetting Soviet attempts in Asia to 'contain' China, such as the Soviet call in 1969 for an Asian collective security system and the recent conclusion of the treaty with India. Thus, as the Soviets have attempted to move into China's backyard, China has in part responded by moving into Russia's. At present China needs as many allies or, as G. F. Hudson has termed them, 'benevolent neutrals',[65] as possible in order to divert or restrain the Soviet Union, and thus it has an interest in strengthening the position of any power in conflict with the Soviet Union. To this end it has a stake in promoting and supporting non-alignment and regionalism in the Balkans. Regardless of its recent diplomatic assertiveness, however, China is not yet a superpower but rather a medium power whose primary concern is regional (Asia) rather than global. Its goals, therefore, remain essentially defensive and parochial: the prevention of its own containment and the counteracting of Soviet influence, particularly in Asia.

Thus, in the case of Rumania, China is likely to pursue a policy based on the premise that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend', but one which falls short of a military alliance that would entail risks that neither wants to undertake at this point. Moreover, Chou En-lai seemed to dampen any hopes that either Rumania or Yugoslavia could expect military aid should they run foul of Moscow when he noted in an interview with a Yugoslav journalist that 'distant water cannot quench fire'.[66] The ineffectiveness of Chinese support of Pakistan has undoubtedly sobered even further Ceausescu's and Tito's views of what either might expect in concrete terms from the Chinese.

The country most affected by China's emergence from its diplomatic isolation may well be Albania, long the lone outpost of Chinese influence in the Balkans. China's acceptance into the community of nations—officially recognized by its admittance to the United Nations—and its increasingly wider contacts, in the Third World as well as elsewhere in the Balkans, is bound to reduce its need for Albania's support as well as possibly limit the amount of economic aid China is willing or able to devote to the Albanian cause.

In fact there are indications that the Albanian-Chinese relationship has already begun to undergo certain strains. The Chinese failed to send a delegation to the Albanian sixth party congress in November 1971, an unprecedented step in the light of the closeness of the ties between

[65] See his article in the November-December 1971 issue of *Problems of Communism*.
[66] *Vjesnik* (Zagreb), 28 August 1971.

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the two countries.[67] Certainly the decision by the Chinese to seek an accommodation with the US has put the Albanians in a ticklish position and runs counter to the unequivocal stand that the Albanians have taken regarding 'US imperialism'. While the Albanian reaction to the Nixon visit has essentially been one of silence and caution, Enver Hoxha specifically warned at the sixth party conference that 'it is not possible to use one imperialism in order to oppose the other'[68]—a message which could be construed both as a criticism of Peking's approaches to Washington as well as a notification that there would be no modification of Albania's stance.[69] Moreover such differences may have been the impetus behind the recent *Westpolitik* that has emanated from Tirana over the last 18 months. This new diplomatic offensive has been evident not only in Albania's relations with its Balkan neighbours but in its greater encouragement of tourism, and the establishment of relations with several West European and non-communist countries.[70] Such divergences do not necessarily signify a major rift between Peking and Tirana but they do indicate that the Sino-Albanian relationship may undergo a slow transition in response to Peking's decreasing need to rely solely on its Balkan ally for support.

The fact remains, however, that as long as the Sino-Soviet dispute exists, China offers both Yugoslavia and Rumania—and other countries too—a means of counteracting Soviet influence and obtaining more freedom of action. This is undoubtedly an unsettling thought for Moscow as it surveys the East European landscape, with its history of recrudescent crisis.

[67] The weak explanation by the Chinese that they had decided at the ninth party congress in 1969 not to send delegations to foreign party congresses hardly seems plausible. It may well be that the struggle surrounding Lin Piao may have prevented the dispatch of a high-level delegation.

[68] Cf. Radio Tirana, 1, 2, and 4 November 1971.

[69] As Hoxha emphasized later in his report to the congress: 'our party *will never stop halfway*; it will fight firmly with all its might against imperialism and social-imperialism, until they are totally destroyed and world revolution triumphs. *Our people and our party consider this double struggle as one indivisible whole, because one cannot successfully thwart imperialism without at the same time fighting Soviet social-imperialism and vice versa*' (Ibid.—author's italics).

[70] Among the most recent have been Luxembourg (February 1972); Peru (December 1971); Chile (September 1971); and Norway and Greece (May 1971). The establishment of relations with Greece is perhaps most significant in that it ends a 'state of war' which had existed technically since the end of the second world war and apparently indicates Greece's abandonment of its claims on 'Northern Epirus'.

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Ostpolitik and the GDR

Robert Bleimann

THE *Abgrenzungspolitik* (policy of demarcation) of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) is a policy based on the assumption of the internal weakness of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), grounded in a fear of the disruptive potential of extensive contacts with the Federal Republic. The apparently contradictory elements of ideological hostility and peaceful coexistence are by no means ideologically irreconcilable and can simultaneously rationalize efforts towards cooperation and invective. The causes of this doctrine may be traced to Chancellor Willy Brandt's revision of West Germany's *Deutschlandpolitik* and to a breakdown in Warsaw Pact solidarity on the nature of the West German 'threat'. The desires of the socialist states for *Entspannung* (relaxation of tension) and a solution to outstanding political issues signified the end of the so-called 'Ulbricht doctrine' which postulated that no moves towards a normalization of relations with Bonn could be made by the Warsaw Pact states without prior concessions by the Federal Republic towards recognition of the GDR.

In addition, an improvement in the climate between the Soviet Union and the Federal Republic, which in any way eroded the pretext that West German 'imperialism' must be deterred, would cease to justify the SED's policy of isolation towards the West. When Chancellor Brandt, in his *Regierungserklärung* of 28 October 1969, first enunciated the doctrine of 'two states in one German nation' and the aim of instituting a 'special relationship' with the GDR, he openly challenged the SED to open the way to a peaceful contest of systems and normal relations. But Chancellor Brandt would not negotiate an agreement with the GDR incorporating the same conditions as those contained in the later Moscow and Warsaw treaties; in them, confirmation of the status quo leads to normalized relations. The converse was true for the GDR as Brandt, appealing to the alleged 'unity of the nation', demanded reciprocal services before he would formally confirm the status quo in Germany. Therefore, the onus for contributing to *Entspannung* fell on the GDR because recognition and UN membership would only follow codification of a special relationship based on the 20 Kassel Points.

Once the East German leaders came to the realization, after the West German-Soviet Treaty, that the process of relaxing tensions was irreversible and that international recognition would only come at the end—this was the SED's only conceivable choice—they saw the necessity to formulate a doctrine that could rationalize limited cooperation while at the same time ensuring distance from the Federal Republic. The significance of *Abgrenzung* lies in the fact that, quite apart from serving to dampen 'false illusions' in both German states on the possibility of any

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' special relationship ', it is a doctrine on a *modus vivendi* suitable to the SED. We shall therefore look in some detail at the circumstances surrounding the formation of *Abgrenzung* and then examine its function in East German policy.

THE Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee meeting on 3–4 December 1969 in Moscow, after numerous signs earlier that year, formally abandoned the so-called ' Ulbricht doctrine '. Previously, the Warsaw Pact summits had put forward the demand, at the GDR's insistence, that East Berlin must be recognized by Bonn as a precondition to bilateral discussions between any of the Eastern European states and the Federal Republic. Instead, the Warsaw Pact states now affirmed in the communiqué that they would encourage bilateral relations with Bonn based on the following principles: ' equality of rights, non-interference in internal affairs, and recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability of the existing boundaries.' [1]

The effects of this alteration in Warsaw Pact policy on the GDR's *Deutschlandpolitik* became immediately apparent as Walter Ulbricht, in an attempt to swim against the tide of *Entspannung*, increased the stakes vis-à-vis the Federal Republic. The First Secretary stated unequivocally that his demands were not ' maximal ' but ' minimal ', or, in other words, non-negotiable.[2] In addition, Ulbricht flatly rejected the concept of ' special intra-German relations ', declaring that the GDR is a foreign country to West Germany, called for normal relations based on international law, and called for the exchange of diplomatic representatives in his draft treaty presented to President Heinemann.[3] This message was aimed simultaneously at the Federal Republic and at the East—a warning that East German interests, i.e. its demand for recognition, could not be easily compromised.

The spring of 1970 saw the unprecedented, show-piece summit meetings between Chancellor Willy Brandt and Premier Stoph in Erfurt and later in Kassel. The question as to why the SED agreed to hold direct summit negotiations hasn't been satisfactorily answered. One interpretation is that Ulbricht believed that such a meeting would upgrade the international status of the GDR. This goal seems to have been one of the SED's major aims, as the SED leaders stated after Erfurt that the talks had been ' useful ' because the world had a chance ' to see that there exists a stable, sovereign socialist state ' [4] in Germany. A second explanation is that, if the Federal Republic rejected East

[1] *Neues Deutschland* (*ND*), 5 December 1969.
[2] *ND*, 14 December 1969.
[3] Other demands made at this time were an end to juridical aggression, renunciation of the Paris Treaty, and a reduction in arms expenditures by 50 per cent. The Heinemann letter and treaty proposal were published in *ND* (21 December 1969). Ulbricht also proposed a transit treaty on 26 November which, if Bonn had accepted the terms, would have resulted in the recognition of the GDR.
[4] Norden in a speech to the Volkskammer, *ND*, 22 March 1970. Ulbricht and Stoph also made similar statements at this time.

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Germany's terms—which it did—it would emphasize Bonn's 'intransigence' and show West Germany's true aims to the Eastern countries eager to normalize relations.

In the interim between Erfurt and Kassel, signs of a re-appraisal of the so-called 'usefulness' of the talks emerged in SED comments. Erfurt, in retrospect, had unexpectedly raised hopes in the East German population of—and increased Bonn's optimism about—a possible amelioration in the state of intra-German relations. Social Democratism after all proved to be an attractive and democratic alternative to the SED. The Party was caught in a second dilemma because its intransigence at the summits flew in the face of Soviet initiatives towards a more conciliatory posture in Europe. East Germany's recognition that its houseful of demands might be built on sand was reflected in Ulbricht's remark that 'peace demands not empty declarations but solid guarantees'.[5]

The 13th SED Central Committee (CC) Plenum on 10 June underscored the increasing polarization in higher Party circles. It ended without the establishment of a unified position on *Deutschlandpolitik* in the light of the Kassel conference, which had resulted in a *Denkpause* (pause for reflection) after the two heads of state failed to reach an agreement. Albert Norden delivered the keynote speech to the CC and emphasized three main points[6]:

> 1. The intensification of the world-wide class confrontation between socialism and imperialism finds its expression in Europe in the fact that West German imperialism, on the basis of the changed relationship of forces in favour of socialism, continues its revanchist, counter-revolutionary policy against the socialist countries, especially the GDR, with changed methods.
> 2. The change of government in Bonn in the autumn of 1969 has by no means reduced the dangers to peace and European security emanating from West German imperialism.
> 3. In the centre of Europe, two states with completely contrasting and incompatible social systems are confronting each other in the shape of the socialist German Democratic Republic and the monopoly-capitalist Federal Republic.

Norden also reiterated the point made by Willi Stoph in Kassel that recognition was not just a question of prestige or a juridical problem but central to European peace. The means of counteracting this threat were to strengthen the republic by integrating it further into the socialist community, by reinforcing the military and security organs, and by stimulating class consciousness.

[5] *ND*, 4 April 1970. The paragraph continues: 'The touchstone of the true intentions of the new government of the German Federal Republic is the contractual regulation of equal relations toward the GDR on the basis of international law, the unreserved recognition of the existing European boundaries, especially the state border between the GDR and the FRG . . . recognition of the invalidity of its unlawful pretensions concerning West Berlin . . .'

[6] *ND*, 15 June 1970. This is remarkably similar to two of Honecker's speeches, see *ND*, 22 February 1970 and *ND*, 31 May 1970.

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Ulbricht's speech to the CC was more moderate in tone and reflected a tactical shift in East German policy. First, he dropped the precondition that the Federal Republic must recognize the GDR—another demand made by Stoph at Kassel—before the GDR would end the *Denkpause*. Secondly, he proposed that 'the GDR and the FRG should first agree to apply for membership in the UN and to an exchange of diplomatic representatives at ambassadorial level'.[7]

The first Secretary, in these first two points, had undoubtedly transferred the question of East Germany's prestige, in accordance with Soviet wishes, from the sphere of intra-German relations to the international level. He also mentioned in his speech the Gromyko-Bahr negotiations on a renunciation of force treaty which, until that time, had not been reported in the East German press[8]; he even wished them success. In addition, he set down three points which can be summarized as follows:

1. International recognition of the GDR and membership in international organizations would not mean the 'juridical perpetuation of the division in Germany' because the division had already been completed when the Federal Republic joined NATO.

2. The West German attitude (the 'Scheel doctrine') that cultivation of normal diplomatic relations between third states and the GDR is an unfriendly act because it hinders bringing about a contractual regulation of the 'intra-German relationship' is erroneous because (a) in view of the separation, there can be no 'special intra-German relations' and, (b) it prevents normal relations between the GDR and third states.

3. The establishment of equal, normalized relations is hindered by Bonn's policy of non-recognition.

The difference between the Norden and Ulbricht views becomes more apparent when we contrast them with a speech Ulbricht made in Rostock on 16 July 1970.[9] He went so far as to admit that: 'After the formation of the new government in Bonn under Chancellor Brandt a certain measure of recognition of realities became apparent.' In a more uncompromising fashion, however, Ulbricht mentioned that 'the length of the *Denkpause* depends only on the time needed by the Federal Government to sign the agreement on the renunciation of force with the Soviet Union'. He then proceeded to list two guarantees which, in his view, were required for the safeguarding of peace:

> *The most important is the recognition of the results of the second world war*, that is to say recognition of all frontiers and the territorial integrity of all European states. *To these guarantees belongs the conclusion of a treaty on the renunciation of force between the*

[7] *ND*, 16 June 1970.

[8] See Ilse Spittmann, 'Von Kassel nach Moskau—Die SED und der deutsch-sowjetische Vertrag', *Deutschland Archiv*, Vol. 3, 10 (October 1970), p. 1109. The first allusion was made indirectly on 13 June as well as in Brezhnev's speech which also made reference to the talks. Ulbricht's speech to the CC was made on 10 June but was not published until six days later.

[9] *ND*, 17 July 1970.

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USSR and the West German Federal Republic.[10] [Emphasis in original]

Another guarantee for the safeguarding of peace in Europe is the establishment of equal relations by all European states with the German Democratic Republic in the form of diplomatic relations on the basis of international law.

It is difficult at this juncture to ascertain whether the divergence between the Norden-Honecker and the Ulbricht statements was simply tactical or was concerned with a suitable strategy towards the Federal Republic. It is evident, however, that the contrast between the two approaches must have been confusing to the East German public. Ulbricht's confession that the Brandt government recognized the realities, or at least some of them, cast doubt on the consistency of the Party's rhetoric to the effect that Bonn was conducting a discriminatory policy against the GDR and that an 'intra-German relationship' would have signified a form of tutelage. In fact, even the act of negotiating with the Federal Republic, no less than of cooperating with it, would have deprived the SED of an invaluable ideological tool to help ensure political stability: the age-old claim that West Germany was an implacable enemy. Ulbricht would have appeared inconsistent if, on the one hand, he labelled the SPD leaders 'realistic' but, on the other, could not agree with them on the form of political relationship between the two states.

On another level, Ulbricht's vacillation between advocating direct negotiations with the Federal Republic to resolve the GDR's status question and bowing to Soviet pressure to forgo ideological acrobatics and to help pave the way for *Entspannung*, thereby accepting a long-term perspective concerning recognition, probably caused equal consternation in the Party hierarchy. Herein lay the SED's dilemma. Recognition by Bonn was infinitely preferable to the indirect method but the lessons of Erfurt and Kassel were clear. A head-on confrontation would have been counter-productive in that the East Germans had little to gain and everything to lose.[11] The Honecker-Norden faction probably recognized these twin dilemmas and the necessity for a strategy that could insulate the GDR from external shock: a policy on an acceptable *modus vivendi* that would enable them to exploit the openings arising from *détente* while preserving ideological consistency and controls.

The first public use of the word *Abgrenzung* occurred at a time of intense diplomatic activity between mid-July and mid-September 1970. The Bonn-Moscow negotiations on a non-aggression treaty reached a

10 He also states: 'After this it should be possible to agree to a treaty on relations of equal rights between the GDR and the FRG on the basis of international law.'

11 At Kassel, Chancellor Brandt had gone so far as to say that he might grant recognition in exchange for assurances that the difficulties caused by the separation would be alleviated. He stated: 'Therefore, it must also be possible, Herr Chairman [Stoph], to give us an answer to our questions. If we were to receive replies to these, I would then be convinced that in the course of time, the question which you designate as the recognition of the GDR under international law could be solved.' Bulletin, Presse- und Informationsamt: Nr. 71 (23 May 1971).

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conclusion and the final draft of the treaty was initialled on 7 August; the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact states convened in Moscow on 20 August to agree on the implications of the treaty and to create a common approach on matters concerning relations with Bonn. In related areas, Warsaw and Bonn were in the midst of intense negotiations on an agreement toward normalizing relations and the Four Powers were in the early rounds of talks on the question of Berlin. And in the Federal Republic, government leaders were making statements to the effect that East Berlin should make the *Denkpause* a *Lernpause* and resume negotiations with Bonn.

THE West German-Soviet Treaty was to prove a disappointment to East Berlin because Bonn's pledge to respect territorial integrity and inviolability did not imply a legalization of the German frontier. Furthermore, Moscow implicitly accepted Brandt's doctrine that recognition of the status quo in Germany could only come about at the end of a process of *Entspannung*—the converse of the Treaty's premise. This became immediately apparent when Moscow did not insist on a German settlement as a complement to the broader trend of resolving border issues, and had the contradictory effect of decoupling the East German issue from the coupling process which ensured that the SED would have a breathing space in its relations with Bonn. On the other hand, inclusion of the Scheel letter on German unity confirmed Brandt's premise that to normalize relations was tantamount to meeting Bonn's demands for reciprocal services from the East German side. The Treaty changed very little, as the same weaknesses in the GDR's bargaining position remained and, as we see below, *détente* obliged the GDR to make concessions on Berlin.

The East German press stated that the treaty was 'good news'[12] and later repeated old demands in a *Ministerrat* declaration of 14 August.[13] The central point of the treaty, the declaration stated, was 'the recognition of the existing status quo which was a result of the second world war in Europe'. The normalization of relations between the GDR and the FRG has now become a 'realistic task capable of solution' and the obligations contained in the treaty make it necessary 'to establish normal diplomatic relations between the GDR and the FRG'. In addition, the three Western powers should support, as a consequence of their support for the treaty, membership of both German states in the UN and there was now no hindrance to the establishment of similar relations with the GDR by third states.

The differences of opinion between East Berlin and Moscow concerning the implications of the treaty became evident when *Tass* printed a shortened version of the *Neues Deutschland* text and omitted the above passages.[14] A few days later the communiqué of the Warsaw Pact

[12] *ND*, 12 August 1970.
[13] *ND*, 15 August 1970.
[14] Ilse Spittmann, 'Von Kassel nach Moskau . . .', p. 1113.

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summit [15] confirmed universal agreement on the treaty and spoke of increased endeavours to convoke a conference on European security; there was no mention of the GDR views. An SED declaration [16] about the Warsaw Pact meeting gave evidence of the East Germans' retreat; it contained only a reference to the statement on the European security conference made in the Pact communiqué but nothing of their previous demands for normalizing relations.

In the meantime, the Soviets were also engaged in negotiations with the three Western powers on the problem of Berlin, an issue which was simultaneously of symbolic importance to the GDR and touched on its vital interests. West Berlin has always been an affront to East Germany's prestige because of its economic and political ties with the Federal Republic. It proved to be a constant reminder of West Germany's presence, and incidentally of the GDR's secondary status. An agreement on the Four-Power level, reaffirming the continuance of Bonn-West Berlin ties in the political sphere, would have been a further blow to its prestige. On this question, Ulbricht attempted to put forward an uncompromising stance, although he repeatedly came under Soviet pressure to revise his standpoint.[17] On a second level, the Berlin question involved the GDR's claim to state sovereignty, the right to control the transit routes from West Germany to West Berlin across the territory of the GDR,[18] and the right to conduct an independent foreign policy.

West Berlin, in a more practical sense, was integral to East German strategy because it was the GDR's only direct trump in the Bonn-East Berlin-Moscow triangle which could be exploited as a lever to impress its demands simultaneously on Bonn and on Moscow.[19] When Willy Brandt and the NATO states coupled ratification of the Moscow Treaty with progress in the quadripartite Berlin talks, East Berlin was made an unwitting partner in the *Entspannung* process. Ulbricht later tried a disruptive tactic over Berlin by attempting to inject his demands for recognition into the coupling process. The unexpected resumption of an intra-German dialogue on traffic matters in November was part of this attempt. For Moscow, ratification was the essence of the matter and Ulbricht was only helping to delay the final day. As in the Berlin crisis in February–March 1969, Moscow saw that the GDR could be a very awkward ally.

Abgrenzung, first promulgated (in verb form) in a speech by Hermann Axen on 13 September 1970,[20] was an ideal concept that resolved the dilemma of inconsistency caused by the breakdown in the rigid system

[15] *ND*, 21 August 1970. [16] *ND*, 28 August 1970.

[17] During the Berlin crisis in February–March 1969, largely provoked by the GDR, the Soviet Union played the role of mediator because it did not want a confrontation with the West.

[18] The GDR claims this right was ceded to them by the Soviet Union in a letter between Dr Lothar Bolz and V. A. Zorin on 20 September 1955 which 'confirmed that' East Germany exercised 'control and authority' over its borders.

[19] See Eberhard Schulz, 'Die DDR als Gegenspieler der Bonner Ostpolitik', *Europa Archiv* 26, 8 (25 April 1971), p. 285. [20] *ND*, 14 September 1970.

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of confrontation. Central to the doctrine of *Abgrenzung* is the idea of the peaceful coexistence of two systems with different social orders. Since its formulation by Lenin, peaceful coexistence can denote (1) a form of class struggle, (2) the peaceful competition between socialism and imperialism as an alternative to war, and (3) a positive effort towards mutually advantageous contacts. In current usage, *Abgrenzung* signifies a neo-Stalin-Zhdanov model (formula 1) of the class struggle which postulates that, as socialist construction advances and the balance of world forces shifts in favour of socialism, the class struggle will intensify. Imperialism, therefore, becomes more aggressive but, in view of the balance of power, must alter its counter-revolutionary methods; by the use of 'bourgeois ideology', it attempts to undermine the foundations of socialism. By definition, *Abgrenzung* precludes human contacts which could expose the population to such 'bourgeois ideology'. On the other hand, *Abgrenzung* (formula 3) also rationalizes GDR readiness to cooperate with its 'imperialist' neighbour. Thus, these seemingly contradictory elements are not irreconcilable and can be used as a rationale for almost any course of action the SED chooses without any appearance of ideological contradiction.[21]

IF the revision in SED thinking on relations with the Federal Republic during the first half of 1970 was painful, the second revision period after the signing of the Moscow Treaty was even more so. The Treaty implied that the foot-draggers in East Berlin had to adopt a more conciliatory approach. Politburo tensions were intensified to the point of estrangement over tactics between the outright opponents of concessions, such as Walter Ulbricht, and those who acquiesced reluctantly.

The principal difference between the two factions was the dispute over the best tactics for the achievement of an international upgrading in the status of the GDR. Honecker, Verner, and Stoph acquiesced in the Soviet argument that recognition of the GDR would only come about at the end of a process of normalization. The Soviet Union, so Moscow's argument went, would protect the sovereign rights of the GDR in international negotiations, so East Berlin should correspondingly make certain essential concessions to aid the process. These same SED members took up the banner of *Abgrenzung* and called for the forging of ever closer ties with the Soviet Union.[22] Earlier demands for international recognition by Bonn were dropped and were replaced by demands for normal relations on the basis of international law. However, *Abgrenzung*, as we have seen, started from the existing legal situation and thereby excluded any special relations.

[21] See Peter C. Ludz, 'Continuity and Change since Ulbricht', *Problems of Communism*, 2 (March–April 1972), p. 61.

[22] The concept came increasingly into vogue. See speeches in 1970 by Stoph, *ND*, 7 October; Honecker, *ND*, 24 October; Norden, *ND*, 6 November; Ebert, *ND*, 27 November; and Honecker, Verner, and Mittag at the 14th CC Plenum in December.

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On the other side, Walter Ulbricht took a more obdurate view—one which was compounded by prestige factors—of the soundness of Moscow's assurances. It is clear that the First Secretary resented the revision in the Warsaw Pact's demands in which his country's needs had been shifted from highest priority to a lower position on the agenda. We can plainly see that after the end of the long period of silence in the SED in early October, Ulbricht went onto the offensive and tried to exploit a number of means at hand to regain East German influence, although we can only speculate as to what specifically he hoped to achieve.

From 20–24 October, a high-powered Party delegation, comprised of Ulbricht, Stoph, and Honecker, paid a visit to Czechoslovakia. In Prague, Ulbricht did not mention the question of recognition but said that ' the German Federal Republic should adopt a realistic attitude towards the German Democratic Republic and its proposals '.[23] Willi Stoph urged Bonn to ratify the Moscow Treaty and then to establish relations under international law, while Honecker moved further from the Ulbricht formula and said there should be ' establishment of normal international-law relations corresponding to the principles of peaceful coexistence with different social orders '.[24] He added that this should also apply to GDR-West German relations.

On 30 October, Dr. Herbert Bertsch unexpectedly went to Bonn to deliver an East German note asking for a resumption of the German dialogue without preconditions. This coincided with the arrival of Andrei Gromyko in East Berlin and raised questions about the connexion between the two events. It became clearer on 8 November when Ulbricht stated in a television interview:

> The government of the GDR has declared itself willing—with the condition that in West Berlin every activity by other states that is contrary to the international-legal status of the city and which violates the interests of the GDR and other socialist states is suspended—to enter into negotiations with the government of the FRG on questions of mutual transit of persons and goods. In this formulation every word is significant.[25]

This was a significant shift in Ulbricht's tactics as he tried to bring the Berlin issue to the intra-German level. I interpret this as an attempt to clarify certain political questions with Bonn concerning Berlin outside the framework of the quadripartite talks. Ulbricht's line continued until early January 1971 and the implications will be discussed below.

Walter Ulbricht returned to the ideological offensive in a speech given at a conference on the 150th anniversary of Engel's birth, in which he implicitly criticized the Soviet Union[26]:

> The resolution of the Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties of 1969 contained many theoretical problems which require

[23] *ND*, 24 October 1970.
[24] *ND*, 24 October 1970.
[25] *ND*, 9 November 1970.
[26] *ND*, 15 November 1970.

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> common interpretation or at least consultations between fraternal parties. We are of the opinion that not enough use has been made of these possibilities for joint consultation on theoretical problems or at least consultation on certain basic theoretical questions.

A week later Ulbricht unexpectedly failed to appear at the 10th Party Congress in Hungary and sent a low-level Party delegation, led by Friedrich Ebert, reportedly because of 'ill health'. It is believed that this was to have been an informal meeting of the heads of the Warsaw Pact states to try to reach agreement on the East's *détente* policy in light of the initialling of the Bonn-Warsaw accord. Ulbricht disapproved of the East's new *rapprochement* with Bonn and decided to stay away to demonstrate his displeasure.

Leonid Brezhnev responded by making public his disagreement with Ulbricht, arguing that the Moscow and Warsaw treaties 'created favourable conditions for a deepening of friendly cooperation between European states in all areas and simultaneously protect the legitimate interests of the German Democratic Republic and other socialist countries'.[27] A week later, Brezhnev changed his line on the Berlin negotiations, which further took the wind out of East Berlin's sails. He adopted a more conciliatory tone in Erevan by commenting that a proposed Berlin agreement must take into account the wishes of the West Berlin population as well as the 'legal interests and sovereign rights' of the GDR.[28]

The urgent need to tone down Ulbricht's obstructionist tactics on Soviet *détente* measures was reflected in the unexpected convocation of a meeting of the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact in East Berlin. The communiqué reaffirmed the primacy of Soviet views over East German attitudes on the European situation. It proclaimed there was agreement that relations between the GDR and the Federal Republic should be 'based on generally accepted norms of international law' and that both German states should become full-fledged members of the UN.[29] The addenda to the final communiqué also criticized Ulbricht, containing resolutions on the situation in Europe, the Near East and South-East Asia which were a direct rejoinder to statements Ulbricht had made on 14 November.

The 14th CC meeting on 9–10 December was convened at a moment when Ulbricht's influence inside the Eastern bloc had declined considerably. The plenum had been postponed twice, suggesting that there was dissension in the higher echelons of the SED on foreign policy. Ulbricht expressed quite sharp differences with the Soviet Union at the outset of his speech[30]:

> There can be no doubt that the recognition of the status quo and the inviolability and unchangeability of the boundaries in Europe are of great importance for the safeguarding of peace and, in

[27] *ND*, 25 November 1970.
[28] *The Times*, 2 December 1970.
[29] *ND*, 4 December 1970.
[30] *ND*, 10 December 1970.

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> particular, to the establishment of normal relations between the GDR and the FRG on the basis of international law.[31] This great initiative for the safeguarding of European security requires that the government of the FRG ceases to consider West Berlin as FRG territory and to interfere in West Berlin through state activities.

This direct linking of European *détente* to the state of the intra-German relationship and to Ulbricht's Berlin schemes represented a challenge to Moscow. Ulbricht also commented quite extensively on the negotiations between Michael Kohl and Egon Bahr which, he hoped, would be conducted on the basis of 'relations common to international practice' because of the GDR's 'sovereign rights'. In fact, we can see that Ulbricht contradicted himself in the following passages:

> If the government of the FRG would end its *unlawful state interference* in West Berlin, then the way would be clear for an agreement between the GDR and the FRG on mutual *transit* traffic. This would undoubtedly have an effect on the negotiations of the ambassadors of the four Powers and would be a contribution towards a *détente*. [Author's italics]

On the other hand he observed:

> In view of the interest of both sides concerning movement of goods and persons *over East Germany to West Berlin*, it would be the most natural thing in the world that the GDR and the FRG, two states independent of one another, should meet and conclude a proper treaty on the reciprocal transit of goods and persons. But the government of the FRG today still avoids negotiations on such an agreement . . . [Author's italics]

Ulbricht commenced his two-tiered assault with an attempt to pre-empt the Four Powers by concluding an agreement with Bonn in which numerous political assumptions would have been implicit. Firstly, had the Four Powers recognized these talks in any way, Ulbricht would have succeeded in coupling his talks to the wider level of East-West *détente*. The very act of suggesting such talks was a monstrous display of East German presumptuousness in assuming that negotiations over resolving the question of access to Berlin fell within its, and not the Four Powers', sphere of competence. To say that Bonn's ties with West Berlin were 'unlawful', when the Four Powers were in the very process of determining those ties, was a further intrusion into the high-level negotiations. Secondly, Ulbricht intended the proposed treaty to encompass 'transit' traffic, implying that control of the access routes over East German territory rested solely in the hands of the GDR authorities. Lastly, the phrase, 'over East Germany to West Berlin',

[31] Further on he states: 'At the meeting of the Political Consultative Committee, some speakers emphasized that the recognition of the German Democratic Republic by all European states represents the central issue of the normalization of the situation in Europe, the central issue for fruitful cooperation between all states for the preservation of European security.'

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pre-dated the later difficulties in the East-West German talks supplementing the Berlin accord, when Michael Kohl stated that Bonn wasn't competent to conclude an agreement on traffic from West Berlin to West Germany.

A curious feature of this CC meeting is the outright divergence of opinion between the contending groups in two major areas of foreign policy. Walter Ulbricht was the only CC member to have mentioned that the Moscow and Warsaw treaties confirmed the status quo. None of the other members, however, mentioned the Bahr-Kohl talks or Berlin. On the other hand, Verner and Stoph stated that the GDR was firmly allied with the Soviet Union, which Ulbricht omitted to mention. Paul Verner said that East German policy, in common with that of its allies, was ratification of the Moscow and Warsaw treaties, 'to bring about a successful security conference, to succeed in bringing about equal relations between all European states, including international-legal relations between the GDR and the FRG'.[32] One can conclude that the Honecker-Verner group accepted the Soviet position that resolution of East Germany's status was not a question for the quadripartite talks but would be resolved at the end of the *Entspannung* process.

There is reason to believe that Walter Ulbricht came under intense Soviet pressure to revise his attitudes on Berlin in the first months of 1971. The first indication is that he started to fall in line with the majority Politburo opinion on the nature of the issues to be discussed in the Bahr-Kohl negotiations. For instance, Ulbricht reiterated the same demands made at the CC Plenum in his New Year speech, but after mid-January omitted all mention of the intra-German talks and made no further references to Berlin at all. Hermann Axen reflected Politburo opinion at the 15th CC Plenum when he said that the GDR 'on 29 October 1970 proposed that the government of the FRG enter into negotiations in due and proper form on the conclusion of a treaty regulating the mutual transit of persons and goods of the GDR and the FRG'.[33] From early February until 3 May there was a moratorium in SED speeches as Ulbricht was in the Soviet Union from 8 February to 14 March and we have no further indications of Party opinion on these issues.

THE main characteristic of East German policy since Ulbricht's departure in May 1971 has been its continuity with former policy goals, i.e. recognition and UN membership, although Erich Honecker has shown a propensity towards greater tactical flexibility. The new leadership, on balance, modified its original reluctance to exploit the openings caused by *Entspannung* and has gradually perceived that it provides a tactical lever for extracting political concessions. Thus, the SED has opted for a policy of small, incremental steps which would give the appearance of great movement.

[32] *ND*, 10 December 1970.

[33] *ND*, 29 January 1971.

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Internally, Erich Honecker has been dismantling the Ulbricht legacy by playing down West Germany's special 'status of affront'[34] and by grouping the Federal Republic in the Western bloc of 'monopoly-capitalist' states. The most important measure is the near-total abandonment of attacks on and reporting of news about West Germany in the East German Party press. Until May 1971 it was almost a rule that one-quarter of *Neues Deutschland* should be devoted to articles on the Federal Republic. Today, the Federal Republic is conspicuous by its absence and it is possible to go for days without seeing the 'FRG' in print; reports of Soviet news have largely filled the gap. In a similar vein, *Deutschlandsender* and *Berliner Welle*, two propaganda radio stations aimed at West Germany, were disbanded on 15 November 1971 and replaced by the 'Voice of the GDR'. The function of the 'Voice' is to broadcast reports about international problems, the developments in the socialist community, and the anti-imperialist struggle.

Other changes have been made because of links to intra-German tasks or because reference has been made to one Germany. The Under-Secretariat for West German Affairs, founded in 1965 to explore contacts with the Federal Republic, was dissolved on 7 July 1971. A similar propaganda organization, the Permanent Committee of the German Workers' Conference, involved with contacts between workers and communists from both parts of Germany, was disbanded on 16 August 1971. Further, the words to the East German national anthem, written by Johannes R. Becher, haven't been heard in the communications media since August, because the last line of the verse reads: 'Germany, united Fatherland'. Similarly, the name of the East German television network was changed in February 1972 from 'German Television' to 'GDR Television'. Finally, the Ulbricht concept of the 'socialist state of the German nation', codified in the 1968 Constitution, has disappeared from speeches in the public realm.

In the sphere of intra-German relations Honecker at first adopted a policy of immobilism. That the tempo of the Bahr-Kohl talks had been slow and little progress reported before the conclusion of the Quadripartite Agreement is not surprising, because resolution of many traffic details was contingent on a clarification of the nature of the ties between West Germany and West Berlin and the principles by which traffic would be regulated. The signing of the Berlin accord, however, dramatically changed the political situation for the GDR. Although the GDR's room for manoeuvre to upgrade its status in the ensuing talks supplementing the Agreement was small, it was assured a place in the coupling process by the very fact that it would be a partner in the final Agreement. As Ambassador Abrassimov stated, after concluding the Agreement, the GDR had been politically upgraded in symbolic terms

[34] Rolf Michaelis, 'Keine Tabus', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 December 1971. See also Bernd Weber. 'SED-Ideologie: Annäherung und Abgrenzung', *Aussenpolitik*, 12/71.

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because the three Western powers had recognized East Germany's sovereign competence to discuss, within the terms of this internationally-binding accord, traffic matters with Bonn and the West Berlin Senate.[35]

We have already seen that *Abgrenzung* defines SED attitudes as to what constitutes, and is permissible under, normalized relations with Bonn in general, but the actual tactics of the attempt to achieve recognition can only be deduced from the agreements reached between the two German states themselves. In addition to the postal and Berlin agreements in 1971, East Berlin concluded a Transit Treaty with Bonn in late April 1972 and also unilaterally declared resumption of Wall passes for West Berliners for Easter and Whitsun in February and eased travel restrictions for West German citizens. We shall briefly examine two characteristic features of these agreements and declarations so that we may be able to see the prospects for the future.

In brief, the GDR has benefited from the lack of a general political settlement establishing an agreed *modus vivendi* between Bonn and East Berlin. The Brandt Government has recognized the necessity for such an agreement because without it Brandt's hoped-for *modus vivendi* based on the 20 Kassel Points would be prejudiced.[36] What this means is that East Germany, in the protocol and provisions of technical accords, will become increasingly recognized by attrition. For instance, the East Germans emphatically stressed that the Berlin accord was the first treaty between East and West Germany that was valid under international law. In future, this problem could reach a head when Bonn issues a statement after ratification of the Traffic Treaty by the Bundestag that it does not imply recognition and East Berlin issues a statement to the contrary.

The three agreements have exhibited two complementary characteristics which provide a guideline for future accords. The first, in accordance with the doctrine of *Abgrenzung*, is that the SED has persisted in relying on their view of the existing legal situation in Germany, showing an unwillingness to compromise in political-legal areas and refusing to acknowledge a special relationship between the two states. The Ulbricht legacy has shown that the regime relied mainly upon unilateral declarations of sovereignty by instituting such measures as the necessity for visas for travel in the GDR, individual payments for such visas, traffic regulations, demands for equalization payments in the postal area and the like. All these were expressly intended, despite the justification for each claim, to underscore the separateness of the two states, the ability of the GDR to set up regulations in its sovereign territory.

The main shift under Honecker is that he has moved away from

[35] See his interview in the weekly *Freie Welt*, 9 September 1971.

[36] After signing the Traffic Treaty, Michael Kohl said in an interview: 'It is an exact international-legal state treaty' which would have 'international-legal obligations' after ratification. Egon Bahr omitted any mention of its international-legal character. The two were prevented from making a common declaration because of this danger. See *ND*, 27 May 1972.

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unilateral declarations to negotiated *faits accomplis*.[37] This is the logical conclusion of developments after Brandt stated his thesis of two states in one German nation. This does not mean that the GDR embraces negotiations with the Federal Republic with open arms. On the contrary, SED apprehensions about internal stability will make themselves felt in trade-offs of limited political concessions for guarantees of eased movement. The negotiations over the Traffic Treaty, as Egon Bahr commented, had been difficult in their own right. It is unclear whether the Soviet Union had any long-term interest in a successful completion of the traffic talks, except possibly as they were nearing completion during the time of Brandt's difficulties over the no-confidence vote and ratification of the Eastern treaties. We may conclude that, if the Soviets haven't a direct stake, future negotiations of a more political nature, especially in view of the contradiction between the Kassel Points and *Abgrenzung*, will become increasingly difficult and protracted.

There are numerous examples of symbolic concessions contained in technical details of the agreements. The postal agreement, which provided for a lump-sum payment to the GDR for services up to 1966, contravenes the principle set down in post-war accords that Germany would remain a single postal unit. The provisions in the supplementary Berlin accord and the Traffic Treaty follow the same general pattern. For instance, continuation of the practice of issuing visas for travel in or through the GDR upholds the principle of the separation of the two states. Traffic matters such as the sealing of vehicles and licensing procedures are likewise to be regulated in accordance with international accords.[38] A major concession made by the Brandt Government in the Traffic Treaty was that the treaty would be ratified—albeit by a procedure different from ratification of treaties signed with third states—by the Bundestag. This indicates a legal upgrading of the GDR's status.

The second characteristic is the inclusion of strict controls in the agreements and declarations to forestall any dangers to the GDR's internal order. Overt controls to preclude excessive contacts are built into the clauses concerning visits to East Germany by West German citizens and West Berliners. A concession was made by East Germany during the signing of the Traffic Treaty, allowing West Germans to visit relations and friends a number of times per year but only upon application by these East German citizens to the competent authorities. The intensity and location of traffic flows can therefore be regulated by these authorities. Similar rules also applied to West Berliners who stayed

[37] There is disagreement in Bonn over whether recognition is a political or a legal act, although the Brandt government argues the case in political terms. The East Germans, however, are extremely sensitive about legal niceties and take some solace in this symbolic upgrading.

[38] Both Bonn and East Berlin are members of the European Personal and Goods Traffic Conference and were accordingly obliged to apply the international agreements CIM and CIF to railway and lorry transit respectively. West Germany, however, had repeatedly refused to codify and apply these standards in previous negotiations.

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more than one day during the Easter and Whitsun visiting periods. Other visits for reasons of commerce, culture, sport, etc. necessitate an invitation from the corresponding East German institution or organization. Tourist trips are also controlled because they must be booked through an authorized travel bureau.[39] Unlike West Berliners, however, visiting privileges for West Germans, such as the number of visits allowed per year and their duration, have not been codified in a treaty, but were unilaterally granted by the GDR. The implementation of these travel arrangements for West Germans will depend on ratification of the Traffic Treaty by the Bundestag and on East Germany's good will.

MAKING predictions about the course of intra-German relations and about the likelihood of entry into the UN is extremely difficult at this time, because they depend on two interrelated variables which are themselves in a process of transition. The GDR, in line with the Soviet Union, has repeatedly linked its treaties with Bonn and the West Berlin Senate with ratification of the Eastern treaties by the Bundestag. Now that they have been ratified and have since come into force the first great coupling process has come to an end. SED comments after ratification indicate that a continuation of the *Entspannung* process, especially in the area of preparations for a European security conference, would favour progress in intra-German negotiations.

We cannot foresee at this time if a second coupling process will emerge before the convocation of a security conference and, if so, who will be the first to make the linkage. We have already seen that if the Soviet Union is on the receiving end, and must produce results as a show of good will, then East German interests which block the path will be compromised. On the other hand, if the Soviet Union makes the linkage demand, then the GDR is granted the opportunity to exploit the situation to upgrade its status. On balance, the prospects appear discouraging for East Berlin because Brandt has repeatedly stated that a security conference would be meaningless without a resolution of the intra-German relationship. Whether the German question is raised before or during a security conference seems immaterial, because it is unlikely that the GDR can rely on the Warsaw Pact states to back its demands—as they did for the only marginally important Stockholm pollution conference —without reservation.

The second, and most important, variable in the equation, the continuation of a viable Social Democratic government in Bonn, simultaneously affects the European climate and the intra-German relationship. The SED, for tactical and policy considerations, prefers the Social Democrats to the CDU/CSU. Honecker clearly revealed his preference

[39] West Berliners had to pay very high road-use fees: up to 200km, 5*DM*; 200–300, 15*DM*; 300–400, 20*DM*; 400-500, 25*DM* for single trips in the GDR. Other covert controls are evident in the cost of tourist trips to various East German resort areas. It was reported that a three-day stay in a GDR resort costs about as much as two weeks in Spain.

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in an interview given the day before the no-confidence vote in the Bundestag, implying that a Barzel government would halt the process of *Entspannung*:

> You can get a pretty good idea [of what to expect] because the CDU/CSU presided over the Bonn government for 20 years. Everyone recalls that time. The CDU/CSU governments put their stake on a policy of strength and progressively worsened relations with the socialist countries. By this policy they contrived to make relations between the GDR and the FRG far worse than are relations between states whose citizens do not speak the same language. For 20 years, leading CDU/CSU circles, though often talking of 'humanity', preached and pursued a policy of enmity towards the GDR. They made the gulf between the GDR and the FRG ever deeper.[40]

The SED's reluctance to see a CDU/CSU government springs from the fact that the Opposition has resolutely opposed support for East Germany's admittance into the UN or recognition of it unless a *modus vivendi* is reached giving due regard to human rights and the freedom of movement of all Germans. There is a fundamental difference of *Weltanschauung* here, because the CDU/CSU believe that resolution of the German question must come before *détente* while the SPD and the SED maintain that only prior agreement on *détente* can lead to a resolution of the German problem; in the SED's view, human rights might be the outcome of *Entspannung* but cannot be a precondition of it. The principal question is not whether the GDR would negotiate with the CDU but whether they could resolve their basic political differences to provide common ground for a dialogue. The SED would surely not be prepared to negotiate according to conditions which are at variance with the whole of SED ideology and foreign policy.

The Opposition has given its approval, in principle, to the December Berlin accord but has also severely criticized individual provisions in the agreement for not giving more absolute assurances that the details will be upheld and for not codifying the above-mentioned principles. Recent difficulties experienced by West Berliners who were unable to secure passes without delay has added fuel to their arguments. Up to now, the Opposition has not made any comments on the Traffic Treaty, or about the ratification procedure, so it is not certain whether they will support the Treaty or not. Therefore, in the tactical realm, the Christian Democrats promise to be a difficult negotiating partner because they are less willing to make symbolic political concessions to the GDR.

It must be emphasized in conclusion that it is impossible to separate the GDR's readiness to reach limited accommodation with Bonn from the SED's long-term objective of achieving international respectability. The East German leaders have undoubtedly recognized that a resolution of this issue is integrally linked with an intra-German dialogue in which

[40] *ND*, 26 April 1972.

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they must satisfactorily meet Brandt's demands for reciprocal services. Appearances and intentions are elements which play an important role because the tension between the Kassel and *Abgrenzung* doctrines is too great to permit a genuine reconciliation; in most points the two are mutually exclusive, so the appearance of accommodation must be maintained. In effect, whether the SED attempts to secure recognition directly from Bonn or circuitously through membership in international agencies and conferences (the World Health Organization or the Stockholm Conference for instance) over which Bonn retains a veto, East Berlin has to perform a delicate balancing act by ensuring that the Federal Republic remains amenable to the idea of granting a political concession to the GDR. The policy of cooperation in limited areas, facilitating recognition by attrition, is the only feasible middle path between head-on confrontation with the West Germans (whereby weaknesses in GDR strategy could be exploited by Bonn—as Brandt did at Kassel) or immobilism. The long-term prospect for East Berlin's equal participation in a European security conference hinges on the same variable. The SED must also give the appearance of having partially resolved the German problem to Bonn's satisfaction because the alternative, a major political clash at the conference, would easily work to the GDR's disadvantage. A new set of external linkages or a new government in Bonn, however, could also compel a revision in East German policy and tactics.

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Germany in the Centre

H. Schurer

THE distinguished French author François Bondy has had the excellent idea of asking a number of politicians, scholars, and journalists to express their attitudes towards the new Germany. The authors come mostly from Europe, but there are contributions from Africa and Asia as well. Personal reminiscences and discussions of current foreign relations, as well as sketches of German cultural relations, result in a highly diverse picture. The main impression is a strong suggestion of the problems involved in the central position of Germany, and to what extent her character as the 'land of the middle' has intensified and multiplied her contacts.

Germany has been involved in the two major wars of the century and the *leitmotif* of the essays * is—have the wounds healed? This is perhaps the most encouraging theme of the collection: that despite the horrors of Nazi occupation—which were by no means uniform in character in the countries on which they were inflicted—nationalism has not been intensified, but a tremendous sobering has overtaken Europe. The most striking example of this is the new relationship between the Federal Republic and France. A person born before the first world war in Germany would be taught as a self-evident truth that Britain was the main enemy, but France the hereditary enemy—Alfred Grosser, a French author himself born in Germany, emphasizes the great change of style which has overtaken the relationship. Paul-Henri Spaak, whose encounters with Germany cover a period of 65 years, emphasizes equally that Germany is now being regarded as a part of Europe which is drawing more and more together. That in a country like Britain nationalism was in decline even before the second war is stressed by John Mander in his essay on today's British attitude—anti-German feelings were far more intense in the first than in the second world war. Bruno Kreisky reminds us of the simple fact that the same thing aspired to by two people can mean something extremely different—in 1919 the Austrian socialists regarded Austria as part of a social democrat Germany and put this sentiment down in an official resolution. Now, after the experience of Nazi Anschluss, Austrian nationality seems to be more firmly established than ever—all the discussions of *grossdeutsch* versus *kleindeutsch* of the nineteenth century seem now very remote indeed.

So far the picture seems to be that things have turned out much better than the most convinced optimist could have hoped in 1945, and there is much to be said for such an optimistic assumption—a little water, however, should be poured into this wine. An Israeli, Vera Elyashiv,

* Francois Bondy, ed., *So sehen sie Deutschland: Staatsmänner, Schriftsteller und Publizisten aus Ost und West nehmen Stellung* (Stuttgart—Degerloch, Seewald Verlag 1970).

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who has visited West Germany, admits she has not really encountered the great change of heart she had hoped for—the overwhelming impression when the great German-Jewish problem was discussed was a terrifying emotional chilliness. The South African author Nadine Gordimer points to attitudes in the Federal Republic which suggest a certain tolerance of South African apartheid. On the other hand, the Federal Republic has gone out of its way to establish friendly relations with Israel—naturally, with the expected reactions from the Arab world. The contribution of the Arab scholar Simon Jargy is of considerable interest in this respect. Perhaps the most startling issue raised in this context is the demonstration by the Indian socialist Asoka Mehta of the extent to which Asian political freedom has been advanced by the two world wars. Hitler used to praise Ramsay Macdonald in the twenties and thirties for taking a firm hand with Indian nationalism—that his policy should have helped this detested cause is one of history's ironies. Mehta's essay is a useful reminder not to see the world too much in European terms.

There is not only the political scene to be observed. To many authors, the tremendous cultural radiation issuing from Germany since the nineteenth century is a subject of intense interest. Here the overall picture is less encouraging; contributors all agree that there is a decline, and the Spanish philosopher Julián Marias states point blank that nowadays one can keep abreast of intellectual developments without a knowledge of German, which in the past would have been deemed unthinkable. The Italian scholar Altiero Spinelli writes sadly on the decline of German cultural influence. When one considers a typical art form of our time, the contrast between films of the UFA period and films produced in the Federal Republic is particularly striking. Jean Rudolf von Salis emphasizes the extent to which Switzerland remained a centre of German culture in the darkest days. To mention some of the East European contributors, an interesting contribution from Hungary, by Iván Boldizsár, discusses cultural relationships and makes it very clear that he expected a greater change of heart in the attitude towards the past than has actually taken place. The Polish scholar Mieczyslaw Tomala contrasts the attitudes of the Federal and of the German Democratic Republic towards Poland and urges steps towards a *détente*; since the essay was published some progress in this direction has already been made. The director of the Institute of International Relations in Moscow promised a contribution—but it was not received. While naturally some familar ground is covered by some of the text, on the whole fresh and unexpected viewpoints abound—the overall impression is that what has been achieved in the political and economic spheres would not have been dreamt of by the wildest optimist in 1945. In the field of cultural radiation, however, the great catastrophe of 1933 has left its permanent trace. In this all-important area, Hitler has inflicted an undeniable loss on the world.

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The Birth of Russian Marxism

Tibor Szamuely*

MARXISM was a theory in search of a testing-ground, and Russia became the country to provide it with these facilities. The experiment has certainly worked: whether it has proved the validity of Marxist doctrine remains more debatable. Yet whatever the degree of success in imposing the Marxist structure upon Russia, this could not have been achieved without substantially adapting it to the country's native traditions. Short of foreign conquest, no political order can survive for any length of time without having roots in the nation's past. No revolution can succeed without such roots. This applies to the Russian Revolution as much as to any other. That the state born of the immense convulsion of 1917 has preserved an essential continuity with pre-revolutionary Russia nobody would deny. What is less generally realized is the basic continuity of the Russian revolutionary movement itself: the adaptation of Marxism, originally imported from the West, to a well-established indigenous revolutionary tradition. This process of adjusting Marxism to the peculiar conditions of Russia—a process without which Marxism would today be no more than a half-forgotten sociological theory—began long before 1917.

The history of Russia—precariously balanced in terms of geography, politics, social relationships, culture, between Europe and Asia—abounds from the very beginning in contradictions and paradoxes. The history of Marxism in Russia, of its appearance, growth and ultimate victory, contains perhaps even more elements of paradox than any other part of the story.

Marxism was a theory specifically designed for societies that had reached the highest degree of development. The socialist revolution, Marx argued, was to be the inevitable outcome of the development of the material productive forces of society, which would come into irreconcilable conflict with outmoded relations of production. It followed from this that socialist revolution could only come about in the most highly industrialized countries of the world. There was no short-cut. As Marx himself wrote in one of the most famous passages of *The Critique of Political Economy*, 'No social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new, higher relations of production never appear before the material conditions of their existence have matured in the womb of the old society itself'.[1] Thus orthodox, 'scientific' Marxism. By any reckoning the Russia of the late nineteenth century was worlds apart from the situation

* This is part of the final chapter of Dr Szamuely's book, *The Russian Tradition*, to be published by Secker & Warburg.

[1] K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works in one volume* (London, 1968), p. 183.

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envisaged by Marx: a backward country with a primitive peasant economy, the rudiments of modern industry, and a mere embryo of a proletariat. Despite the rapid progress upon which Russia was then embarking she would obviously need many decades, probably well over a century, to catch up with, let alone overtake, the western countries for which Marx's prediction had been formulated. Yet it was Russia upon which Marxism soon took the firmest hold, and where the Marxist revolution first achieved victory—a bare generation after Marx's death.

Another paradox is nearly as strange: the attitude of the Founding Fathers towards the pioneers of Russian Marxism. Marx, usually so eager to support even the smallest band of disciples wherever they happened to appear, opposed the formation of a Russian Marxist group and was openly hostile to his bewildered Russian acolytes. Flying in the face not only of his general theory but also of his earlier express views on Russia, Marx made no secret of his preference and his backing for those most un-Marxist revolutionaries, the Populists. So, too, for a number of years did Engels, loftily disregarding all the arguments he had only recently raised against Tkachev.

In the light of these facts it has become customary to speak of the 'ambiguity' or 'ambivalence' of Marx's attitude towards the Russian revolutionary movement (Soviet historians, for their part, have to resort to the most prodigious ideological contortions to explain it all away). Upon closer examination, however, the 'ambiguity' tends to dissolve and we discover a fairly clear-cut, even consistent attitude. But to grasp the entirely logical development of Marx's views on the Russian revolutionary movement we must see Marx as he really was: not as the dedicated, unworldly scholar of legend but as the no less dedicated practical revolutionary of reality. To this real Marx even poorish (by Marxist standards) revolutions were infinitely more valuable than the most brilliant theoretical contributions. Hence the motley collection of assorted revolutionaries of all shades and colours, of whom none shared Marx's ideas but all enjoyed his fervent support—from Kossuth and Garibaldi to the Communards and the Fenians. It was the expectation of revolution and the interests of the revolution that determined Marx's approach to Russia, with all its seemingly inexplicable changes of direction.

FOR 30 years, until the late 1870s, Marx's interest in Russia had been largely limited to two matters: his constant fear of Russian expansionism and almost paranoiac obsession with the omnipotence of the Russian government (Marx even suspected Palmerston of being in the Russians' pay), and the exigencies of his struggle with Bakunin for control of the International Workingmen's Association. Marx is often said to have been anti-Russian. The charge is unfair. He had the greatest respect for some Russian writers, notably Chernyshevsky; he learned Russian (an even rarer accomplishment in his day than it is in ours) when well into middle age, and read and appreciated Pushkin and

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others in the original. But under the circumstances it is not surprising that Marx's favourable comments on Russian affairs should have been few and far between.

More surprising, one might think, is the fact that Marx's theories were becoming well known and acquiring considerable weight within Russia itself. Marx's influence on Lavrov, Tkachev and other Populist ideologists had been considerable. His writings were also penetrating into the academic world, where their earliest propagator was Russia's leading economist, N. I. Ziber. The very first foreign edition of *Capital* was the Russian translation prepared by two prominent Populists, Gherman Lopatin and Nikolai Danielson, which appeared in March 1872. It was passed by the censors because, as they explained, while the author was undoubtedly a confirmed socialist, 'his exposition is far from accessible to the general public' and was 'put forward in a strictly mathematical scientific form'. Although *Capital* can hardly be called a runaway best-seller, the censors' judgment was badly at fault: the book had been printed in 3,000 copies, of which 900 were sold in the first six weeks.[2] (The original German edition of 1867 had been limited to 1,000 copies and took five years to sell out.)

Naturally, Marx would have preferred to see his magnum opus published in the countries that really mattered (it only appeared in France in 1875 and in England in 1887), yet he was wryly amused by the book's success in Russia, of all places, and boasted about it self-deprecatingly to his friends. Not that this led to any revision of his general attitude towards Russia. Ever since the Crimean War had revealed Russia's deep-rooted weaknesses Marx had been vaguely expecting a revolution to break out there at any time (his dread of Russia remained, however, undiminished). Since his own social theory so obviously did not apply to Russia Marx gave little thought to the precise form which a revolution there might take; he spoke indiscriminately about a peasant uprising or a palace *coup* or a combination of both. What he utterly refused to acknowledge was the revolutionary potential of the intelligentsia and the significance of Populism, which he contemptuously dismissed out of hand. Its ideas about the *obshchina* were patently absurd, and its leaders, particularly Bakunin and Herzen, at best trouble-making intriguers, possibly even police agents.

Marx was almost invariably scornful of Russian Populist revolutionaries. Typical of his attitude was a reference, in a letter to Engels in February 1870, to 'the schoolboy nihilism which is today fashionable among Russian students'.[3] Engels expressed himself even more strongly (and, in an odd way, presciently) on the subject, in a letter of 29 April 1870:

> What a misfortune it would be for the world—were this not an incredible lie [of Bakunin's—T. S.]—to have in Russia 40,000 revolu-

[2] *K. Marx, F. Engels i revolyutsionnaya Rossiya* (Moscow, 1967), p. 244.
[3] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, 1st ed. (Moscow, 1931), Vol. XXIV, p. 292.

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> tionary students, who lack the backing of a proletariat or even a revolutionary peasantry, and who cannot hope for any career except the choice between Siberia and emigration to Western Europe. If anything could ruin the West European movement then it would be the importation of these 40,000 more or less educated, ambitious and starving Russian nihilists. These are all candidates for officers' posts—only without an army, and we would be expected to supply them with that. What a brilliant idea: to hand over the European proletariat under Russian command in order to establish unity in its ranks! But seriously, however much Bakunin may exaggerate, it is clear as day that the danger exists. Holy Russia will annually spit out a certain number of these 'careerless' Russians, and they, under the pretext of *principe international*, will everywhere insinuate themselves among the workers, demand the leading position, introduce their personal intrigues—which are inevitable among Russians.[4]

This extremely hostile opinion can be partly explained by Marx's implacable hatred towards Bakunin and all those whom, rightly or wrongly, he regarded as Bakunin's allies. But Engels's theoretical broadside against Tkachev was not made in a fit of pique: it set forth a considered analysis (approved by Marx himself) of the future development of Russia and the Russian revolutionary movement, which left no room either for a conspiratorial *coup d'état* or for a short-cut to socialism via the *obshchina*. Even in September 1877, after the open emergence of *Zemlya i Volya*, when Marx was hopefully diagnosing the 'complete disintegration' of all segments of Russian society, he could find words of praise only for the 'splendid Turks', and sneered that 'the foolish antics of the Russian students are mere symptoms, of no importance whatever in themselves'.[5]

Quite suddenly, a few months later, Marx came to reverse his entire attitude to the Russian revolution. From then on until Marx's death in 1883 (and, in Engels's case, for several more years thereafter) the founders of Marxism consistently believed, not only that the world revolution would begin in Russia, but also that it would be carried out by an elite conspiratorial organization, and that Russia had an excellent chance of by-passing the stage of capitalism and of achieving socialism earlier than any other country—thanks to the continued existence of the village commune! In other words, they had accepted practically the whole of the Populist case.

This extraordinary volte-face had not been preceded by any revision of the basic Marxist theoretical premise: its only explanation can be found in the changed state of Marx's mind, induced by a long period of bitter personal and political disappointment. The turning-point had come in 1871 with the tragic débâcle of the Paris Commune. However hard Marx tried to keep up appearances, his spirit was broken. For 25 years Marx had lived in the expectation of a proletarian revolution; everything he did or wrote was directed towards its imminent arrival.

[4] Ibid. p. 327.

[5] Ibid. Vol. XXVI, p. 480.

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At last, in March 1871 the prophecy was fulfilled: the working-class of the capital of Europe's largest and most revolutionary country had seized power. Less than two months later it was all over; no one had supported the Commune—and it fell, disabled by its own follies, drowned in blood by the government of Versailles.

Marx could not have known that there were to be no more proletarian revolutions in the West, but some premonition may have entered his mind, for he never recovered from the blow. 'The Commune', write the authors of a scholarly study of Marx's work in the International, 'marked a climax in Marx's life of which the last 12 years were strangely barren both in political activity and in theoretical work'.[6] A curious lassitude settled upon Marx; throughout these years he lived what can only be described as the life of a gentleman of leisure (financed by Engels). In effect he retired from active politics: at the Hague congress of the First International in September 1872 he carried through a resolution to close down the organization by which he had once set such great store and ship off what remained to America. The thing had lost all point, he explained, and was riddled through and through with Bakuninites. Besides, at last he would be free to return to the theoretical research that was his real life-work, and to complete the remaining two volumes of *Capital*. He went on complaining endlessly about the strain of overwork, but when after his death Engels, as Marx's literary executor, finally gained access to his manuscripts he discovered to his amazement that Marx had left only rough and fragmentary notes for Volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital*, almost all of which dated from the 1860s. During the last 10 years of his life, apart from letters, Marx wrote only two short articles, an epilogue to an earlier work, prefaces to new German and Russian editions of *The Communist Manifesto* (jointly with Engels), and his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (not for publication). That was all. His heart was no longer in his work. 'He had lost none of his intellectual and political acumen, but something had gone. He no longer had the capacity for sustained creative work. He was only 53 when the Commune fell, but this was the turning-point in his life. . . . Marx could not face the prospect of a long period of painfully slow development as he had faced it in his thirties.'[7]

There was little for Marx's comfort in the decade that followed the Commune. One by one the revolutionary lights went out in the West. The unification of Germany and Italy eliminated two great seed-beds of rebellion. Poland, too, remained quiescent, while Hungary achieved an accommodation with Austria. An unprecedented era of peace, prosperity, and rising living standards had set in. Despite the depression of 1873, economic progress was gathering speed everywhere; industrialization, previously confined largely to Britain, was rapidly transforming Germany and the United States. But its social effects ran directly counter to all

[6] H. Collins and C. Abramsky, *Karl Marx and the British Labour Movement* (London, 1965), p. 296.
[7] Ibid. p. 298.

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the Marxist assumptions: instead of increased impoverishment and sharper social strife the temperature of the class conflict was falling. Marx could find no consolation in any of the countries that had so recently seemed ripe for social revolution. After a short but savage period of counter-revolutionary terror the Third Republic in France settled down to a comfortably disreputable existence. The Fenian movement had been suppressed, and Marx gradually lost interest in Ireland: championship of the Irish cause, he had realized, was not exactly the best way to win support among the English working-class. The English workers were what mattered, but the state of their revolutionary class-consciousness was such as to drive any Marxist to despair: the parliamentary reform of 1867 and the great reforming Acts of the 1870s had created a new social climate; the trade union movement was resolutely turning its back on the idea of revolutionary struggle; in an article on 'The British Elections' (March 1874) Engels despondently acknowledged that the wily bourgeoisie had taken over almost all the Chartists' demands, and bitterly reviled his erstwhile British comrades from the General Council of the International as paid agents of the capitalist class.

Nor was the situation better elsewhere. During and after the American Civil War Marx had placed great hopes on the United States; he was convinced that the war would lead to a profound social revolution. Instead the country was soon caught up in the money-making orgy of the 'Gilded Age'. Yet the cruellest blow of all was delivered by the workers of Marx's native land, Germany. For a short time Marx spoke hopefully of 'the centre of revolution' having moved eastward, from France to Germany. Things were indeed looking up: in 1874 seven socialists were elected to the Reichstag, and the next year in Gotha the two rival socialist factions united into a single party under Marxist leadership. Then calamity struck. In 1878 the Reichstag passed Bismarck's anti-socialist law banning practically every social-democratic activity. And—to quote Marx's own words when describing Cromwell's dissolution of the Rump of the Long Parliament—not a dog barked: the German workers accepted the measure with complete equanimity, consoled no doubt by rapidly rising real wages and by Bismarck's newly invented social security system.

The degree of Marx's disillusionment can be gauged by the fact that 10 years after the Paris Commune he no longer believed that it had been a real proletarian revolution, and saw the episode only as a colossal waste of life and effort. In a letter to the Dutch revolutionary Domela Nieuwenhuis Marx wrote: 'The Paris Commune . . . was merely the rising of a city under exceptional conditions, and the majority of the Commune was in no sense socialist, nor could it be. However, with a small amount of common sense it could have reached a compromise with Versailles useful to the whole mass of the people—the only thing possible at that time'.[8]

[8] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVII, p. 116.

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One can hardly be surprised then that, coming when it did, the stirring news from Russia—the formation of a widespread illegal party, the involvement of workers in revolutionary activity, the gun-battles, the strikes and demonstrations, the assassinations, the abject helplessness of the authorities—all the unmistakable signs of an imminent upheaval—should have pierced the atmosphere of unrelieved gloom like a brilliant ray of light. The old revolutionary's pulse quickened: once more there was hope. Perhaps revolution would come from the East—from even further East than he had imagined. What matter that events were developing not in accordance with his own theories, that they were proving his ideological opponents right? All that counted was the Deed, the Revolution, and the Russians were achieving miraculous results with their methods, while others, ideologically purer, had got nowhere. Perhaps the Russians had been right all the time? Perhaps there was no real contradiction between Marxist theory and Populist practice, which might supply the missing ingredient necessary for a concrete revolutionary situation? Come to that, perhaps even the theoretical ramblings about the *obshchina* had been soundly based? Anyway, it did not really matter—things would sort themselves out; that was what the laws of history were for. The Jacobin soul that had lain dormant since the heady days of 1848–50 once more awoke in Marx.

THE first indication that Marx was revising his views on the village commune is found in a letter to Nikolai Mikhailovsky, then editor of the radical journal *Otechestvennye Zapiski*, written at the very end of 1877 but never posted (it was only discovered after Marx's death and first published, significantly, not by the Marxists but by the remnants of the *narodovoltsy*). Mikhailovsky had written that Marx's theory denied the possibility of Russia by-passing the capitalist stage, and of socialism growing directly out of the village commune. Marx strongly repudiated any such interpretation of his writings. Never, he went on, had he implied that Russia must inevitably go through the stage of capitalism, or that his theory need necessarily fit every nation of the world. The key passage read: 'I have come to the following conclusion: If Russia will continue along the path she has followed since 1861 then she will let slip the finest opportunity that history has ever offered any nation and will experience all the disastrous afflictions of the capitalist system.' [9]

The question of the *obshchina*, however, continued to bother Marx even after he had committed himself firmly—as will be shown further—to the cause of *Narodnaya Volya*. After all, it was a serious theoretical stumbling-block, and not a few would-be Russian followers were frightened away by his seemingly intransigent attitude towards their traditional sacred cow. In February 1881 Vera Zasulich wrote to Marx asking him point-blank about his views on the subject. The poor woman,

[9] Ibid. Vol. XV, p. 376.

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whose ability to grasp the finer doctrinal points had never been very great, was now utterly confused. Some Russian Marxists, she explained, were saying that all nations would have to pass through the stage of capitalist development and that therefore the village commune was doomed to destruction. If this really was the conclusion to be drawn from *Capital* then obviously there was no sense in trying to preserve the *obshchina* and working towards a speedy revolutionary transformation of society on its basis: all activity should instead be concentrated on gaining influence among the working-class, in the expectation of an eventual proletarian revolution after capitalism had had time to develop fully. Would Citizen Marx please be so kind as to tell her how matters actually stood in this respect? [10]

Marx seized the opportunity. In his reply (8 March 1881) he did his best to dispel 'the misunderstanding with regard to my so-called theory'. Never, he wrote, had he suggested that his scheme of social development was universally applicable. The analysis in *Capital* showed that the 'historical inevitability' of the capitalist phase 'was *precisely* limited to the countries of Western Europe'. It did not relate to Russia because the development of capitalism meant 'the transformation of one form of private property into another form of private property, whereas in the case of the Russian peasants it would be necessary, on the contrary, to transform their common property into private property'. Although *Capital* contained no specific references to the Russian commune, 'the special research that I have carried out on material from primary sources has convinced me that this *obshchina* is the fulcrum for Russia's social regeneration. But in order that it may fulfil this role it is necessary first of all to eliminate the pernicious influences to which it is subjected, and then to assure it of normal conditions for untrammelled development.' In other words, to carry out a revolution.[11]

Marx's letter to Zasulich was quite brief: some 400 words in all. But it was the product of strenuous work, of no less than four preliminary drafts which, taken together, are 20 times the length of the final text and represent the most detailed exposition of Marx's matured views on the *obshchina* and the future of Russia's revolutionary development. Marx devoted at least two weeks to the task: not so much composing a letter to an unfamiliar correspondent as working the problem out for himself, mulling over it, seeking an adequate solution to the very special case posed by Russia. It was the usual extremely thorough Marxian piece of work, a learned dissertation based on authorities from Tacitus to Sir Henry Maine. And, as usual, he found the answer—by skilfully incorporating the *obshchina* into his great vision of mankind's past, present and future.

Marx disowned the views attributed to him by followers of whom he had never heard. 'The process which I analysed . . . substituted one

[10] *K. Marx, F. Engels i revolyutsionnaya Rossiya*, pp. 434–35.
[11] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 117–8

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form of property by another. How could this be applied to Russia, where the land is not and never has been the husbandman's "private property"? ' In Russia, unlike any Western country, 'common ownership of the land represents the natural basis for collective production and appropriation'. To be sure, similar agricultural communities had existed at a particular stage in the historical development of every society. But the Russian commune differed from them all in certain crucial respects; for one thing, it was not based on blood-ties, and thus retained vitality and potential for further growth. Everywhere else the 'archaic' agricultural community had disappeared. 'Why then should it escape this fate in Russia alone?' Because of an exceptional combination of circumstances: first, 'Russia is the only European country where the "agricultural commune" has survived to our day on a national scale", and, secondly, because the Russian communal system is not isolated artificially from the modern world (as, for example, in British India), and can thus adopt and utilize all the achievements of modern industry and technology. Of course, the *possibility* of a capitalist transformation should by no means be excluded. The commune, having maintained its vitality, continues to develop; at the present time it is approaching a cross-roads. 'Either the element of private ownership that is contained within it overcomes the collective element, or the latter overcomes the first. It all depends upon the historical milieu.' But there is no *inevitability* about a capitalist development in Russia—rather, the contrary. In Russia's case the introduction of capitalism, far from being historically progressive, as everywhere else, would actually represent a retrograde step: 'It would mean the substitution of capitalist ownership for communist ownership.' Happily, Russia does not have to undergo the horrors of the capitalist system in order to enjoy the fruits of its development—any more than she would need to re-invent the machines, the railways, the banking and currency methods evolved in the West in the course of centuries. She can take over all the positive achievements of Western capitalism ready-made. But in her case—and only in her case—the capitalist system as such is uncalled-for.

Marx repeatedly drove home the central point of his argument: capitalism was an inevitable and necessary stage in the historical development of all civilized nations towards socialism—with the sole exception of Russia, which was in a unique position to by-pass the stage of capitalism altogether and move directly into the socialist phase. The decisive factor that made this possible was the *obshchina*. 'It occupies a completely special place, unprecedented in history. Alone in Europe, it represents the organic, dominating form of village life of a vast empire. The common ownership of land is the natural basis for collective appropriation, while its historical milieu, namely the contemporaneous existence of capitalist production, provides it ready-made with the material means for organized wide-scale cooperative labour. It can therefore utilize all the positive attainments of the capitalist system without having to pass

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through its Caudine Forks.' Given the appropriate conditions, the *obshchina* 'could become the direct point of departure for the economic system towards which modern society is moving, without having had to commit suicide'. Marx was quite clear in his mind regarding the pre-condition for Russia's direct transition to socialism. 'What is needed to save the Russian *obshchina* is the Russian revolution... If the revolution takes place at the proper time, if it concentrates all its forces on assuring the untrammelled development of the village commune, then this latter would shortly become the basic feature of the re-birth of Russian society and the basic feature of its superiority to the countries that remain under the yoke of capitalism.' [12]

THE above is a compression of Marx's somewhat diffuse, at times repetitive, meditations on this central question of Russian revolutionary doctrine. Whatever the merit of his arguments, however Marxian the phraseology in which they were couched, one point is beyond honest dispute: they stood in direct contradiction of the Marxist theory of social development. Without acknowledging it in so many words, Marx had revoked everything he and Engels had said for 30 years in their polemic with Populism, and accepted all the ideas hitherto held up to scorn: Russia's special predestination, her advantage over the capitalist West, the possibility of a non-capitalist road to socialism, the glories of the *obshchina*—all of it, without reserve. No wonder this document—Marx's last original contribution to the theory that bears his name—has ever since caused acute embarrassment to every ideological variety of Marxism. It undermined the very foundation of their doctrinal certainty in a rigid set of rules determining, with scientific precision, the whole evolution of human society. Hardly any of the latter-day Marxists have been able to match the revolutionary pragmatism of a man ever ready to re-think his basic views in the light of practical developments. When Marx wrote, in his celebrated 'Eleventh Thesis on Feuerbach', that 'the philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to *change* it'—he meant exactly what he said. And he remained faithful to this principle all his life.

The revolutionary Populists were overjoyed at having their creed endorsed by the foremost Western socialist thinker. Marx and Engels made their changed attitude public early in 1882, in their Preface to a new Russian edition of *The Communist Manifesto*:

> Now the question is: can the Russian *obshchina*, though greatly undermined, yet a form of the primeval common ownership of land, pass directly to the higher form of communist common ownership? Or, on the contrary, must it first pass through the same process of dissolution as constitutes the historical evolution of the West?
>
> The only answer to that possible today is this: If the Russian Revolution becomes the signal for a proletarian revolution in the

[12] Ibid. pp. 677–97.

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> West, so that both complement each other, the present Russian common ownership of land may serve as the starting point for a communist development.[13]

The Preface, with its mention of a complementary proletarian revolution in the West, to be sparked off by Russia, was somewhat more cautious than Marx's letter to Zasulich. But the inference was clear. The Preface was first published, not in Plekhanov's new edition of the *Manifesto*, but three months earlier, less than a month after it had been written, in *Narodnaya Volya*, No. 8–9, with an exultant footnote:

> It gives us great pleasure to publish this Preface, in view of the profound scientific and practical importance of the problems discussed. We are especially gratified to note the concluding words. We see in them confirmation of a cardinal thesis of the theory of *narodovolstvo*—confirmation based on the findings of such great scientific authorities as Marx and Engels. The long-awaited continuation of Marx's famous work (*Capital*) will undoubtedly give due space to elaborating the propositions which could only be touched upon in this Preface.[14]

The *narodovoltsy* had good grounds for their confidence, as Marx had promised them to write a detailed treatise on the *obshchina* (in the event, he never got around to it). By this time the close collaboration between Marx and Engels and *Narodnaya Volya* was in full swing. The founders of 'scientific socialism' now approved of the method of political assassination. The day after the death sentence had been passed on Zhelyabov and his comrades Marx described them to his daughter: 'They are sterling people through and through, without a melodramatic pose, simple, businesslike, heroic... They try to show Europe that their *modus operandi* is a specifically Russian and historically inevitable method about which there is no more reason to moralize—for or against—than about the earthquake of Chios.'[15]

In the split between *Narodnaya Volya* and *Chernyi Peredel* Marx from the first unequivocally sided with the terrorists. He established direct contact with them early in 1880 through Lev Gartman, an agent of the Executive Committee just arrived in London. On 27 May 1880 Gartman wrote to the arch-terrorist Morozov: 'Choosing between the two organizations he has determinedly taken the side and supported the programme of the terrorists.' But Marx had understandable qualms about openly embracing the principles he had opposed for so many years. Two months later Gartman was reporting to Morozov: 'You shouldn't count on Marx, I mean on getting his article. He won't write it. He will sympathize in private, so to speak, but not in print, because he says that the terrorists' programme is not socialist. In short, he is

[13] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Moscow, n.d.), p. 12.
[14] *Literatura partii Narodnoi Voli* (Paris, 1905), p. 558.
[15] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVII, p. 128.

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cautious.'[16] Marx was indeed cautious when it came to public expression of his new-found sympathies, but in private correspondence with friends he made no bones about his choice. On 5 November 1880 he informed one such old associate, F. A. Sorge, that in Russia 'we have a central committee of the terrorists, whose programme, recently published in Petersburg, has aroused the rage of the Russian anarchists in Switzerland, who in Geneva are publishing *Die schwartze Verteilung* (*Chernyi Peredel*). These people—the majority of them (not all) are those who left Russia voluntarily—have formed, in contrast to the terrorists who are risking their lives, a so-called propaganda party. (In order to conduct propaganda in Russia they go to Geneva! What a *quid pro quo*!)'[17] The spectacle of Marx—who had fled to London as a haven for his revolutionary activities in order to escape, at most, a short prison sentence—mocking Russian rebels for *voluntarily* evading the very real threat of execution, is an unedifying one, though fairly typical of his peculiar moral standards. Yet it also contained a much more poignant irony: the members of *Chernyi Peredel* were even then becoming orthodox Marxists —only to discover that Marx and Engels had meanwhile moved over towards accepting the basic Populist theses.

Marx had no patience with the idea of a 'so-called propaganda party' being formed, even in support of his own doctrines, at the very moment when a genuinely activist revolutionary party existed inside Russia. With the revolution obviously due any time he had more pressing matters to attend to. He was being regularly informed by the Executive Committee, via Gartman, about the latest current developments, including their preparations for a *coup d'état*. Marx, in turn, acted as a kind of foreign affairs consultant to the *narodovoltsy*, advising them on the best ways of influencing Western public opinion. He supplied their representatives with useful introductions to influential people, and took an active part in negotiations aimed at starting an English-language *narodovolets* newspaper in London (the idea fell through).[18]

The high regard in which Marx was held by *Narodnaya Volya* found its expression in an official Address to him from the Executive Committee, dated 6 November 1880 and published a few weeks later in *L'Intransigeant*. Not even Marx's most devoted followers could have outdone the lavish panegyric: 'The progressive intelligentsia of Russia, ever attentive to European intellectual developments, has received the appearance of your scientific works with great enthusiasm. The most sterling tendencies of Russian life have found their scientific confirmation in these works. *Capital* has become a handbook for all educated people . . . It is only natural that your name should have become indissolubly connected with the internal struggle in Russia.'[19] At about the same time Marx was sent a copy of the 'Programme of working class

[16] S. S. Volk, *Narodnaya Volya* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1966), p. 441.
[17] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVII, p. 100.
[18] Volk, op. cit. pp. 440–43. [19] *K. Marx, F. Engels i revolyutsionnaya Rossiya*, p. 427.

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members of *Narodnaya Volya*', which earned his full approval; indeed, there are strong, though not entirely conclusive, indications that he actually helped to edit this important statement of aims.

The eulogy of Marxist theory contained in the Address of the Executive Committee was no idle phrase-making. Their alliance with Marx (for that is what it amounted to) was not confined to practical cooperation: Marx's approval of basic elements of Populist doctrine was more than matched by the eagerness of the *narodovoltsy* to study Marxism, to accept its tenets and to adapt them to Russian conditions. Classical Populism had been suspicious of Marxism because of its stress on political action, political organization and political revolution. Politics, wrote Lavrov and others, could never bring about the social revolution; the political struggle was of benefit only to the bourgeoisie, not the people; politics were incompatible with socialism. Now all was changed. *Zemlya i Volya* had split precisely over the issue of 'politics' versus 'propaganda', between the 'politicals' and the 'villagers'. *Narodnaya Volya* was established as a political organization; what repelled the 'villagers' was not its method of political assassination (some of the 'villagers' had been active terrorists themselves) but its unabashedly political aims: the preparation of a *coup d'état* and the seizure of power. As Zhelyabov declared, they were all statists. With this most difficult of hurdles overcome the sole obstacle between the *narodovoltsy* and Marxism was Marx's disbelief in 'Russian socialism' and the *obshchina*. Then that, too, was removed.

Given these modifications, Marxism undoubtedly possessed many attractions for the revolutionary Populist. It was a far more sophisticated doctrine than any home-grown product, it gave a convincing explanation of the relationship between political and social change, it exposed the horrors of the capitalist path. Above all, it was 'scientific'.

We have perhaps tended to under-estimate the influence of Marxism upon the men and women of *Narodnaya Volya* (unconsciously following the lead of Soviet historiography, with its vested interest in emphasizing the divide between 'Populism' and 'Marxism-Leninism'). Not that the *narodovoltsy* ever became in any sense 'orthodox' Marxists—it is the very unorthodoxy of their peculiarly Russian approach that gives it its significance. Many elements of Marxism were taken over by them intact, some were adapted, still others misunderstood or misinterpreted. They had no inhibitions about this: after all, Marx himself had recognized their circumstances to be *sui generis*. The time at their disposal was strictly limited and the experiment short-lived. It was to be taken up later—with more lasting success.

THE fusion of Marxism and the Russian revolutionary tradition produced a curious hybrid: not really a blend, rather a compound of easily distinguishable ingredients. Nevertheless, without the component of Marxism *Narodnaya Volya* could probably never have become more

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than just another group of terrorists. Writing many years later, Vera Figner conveys a vivid impression of the effect *Capital*, first read in 1881, had upon her. Figner's description of the strange medley of ideas and associations this produced could, one feels, apply just as well to later generations of Russian Marxists.

> The book had an exceptionally powerful impact upon me; this was, one might say, my second baptism in socialism. Marx's impassioned eloquence imprinted whole pages upon my memory in words of fire . . .
>
> The knowledge that we feeble individuals were backed by a mighty historical process filled one with ecstasy and established such a firm foundation for the individual's activities that, it seemed, all the hardships of the struggle could be overcome.
>
> I did not reconsider all my previous views or all the earlier influences; I did not readjust my ideas on the basis of Marx's theory. The previous views remained as the underlying stratum above which was deposited everything learnt from *Capital*. These two layers never intermingled, but in some mysterious fashion they fused together and doubled the power of conviction and the determination to struggle and to fight—to fight now, immediately, using those weapons which were at hand and which were called for by the reality around us.[20]

Narodnaya Volya was neither a monolithic nor an ideological party. Its members were in agreement regarding basic problems of strategy and tactics—beyond that there was hardly any attempt to draw up a unified and binding body of doctrine. However, some of the more thoughtful *narodovoltsy* did try to set their ideas into the wider framework of some general social philosophy. Marxism had an obvious appeal, yet their efforts to create a specifically Russian variety of Marxism resulted in something uncommonly like Tkachevism—just as Tkachev had arrived at his own views through an understanding of the Marxist laws of economic development and their application to Russia.

Nikolai Kibalchich perhaps came nearest to successfully welding the two disparate elements into a coherent and rational structure. His trenchant article on 'The Political Revolution and the Economic Question' set out the special predicament of the Russian revolutionary party: it had to achieve not only a social revolution but also the destruction of political despotism, a task already fulfilled in Europe by the bourgeoisie. But can a country's political structure influence its social system? There are three schools of thought with regard to this, explained Kibalchich. The first, represented by Tkachev, are Jacobins, statists 'who wish to seize power in order to decree a political and social revolution, and to introduce socialist principles into the people's life from above', without the direct participation of the people. On the other hand there are those, like the *Chernyi Peredel* group, who deny the validity of political struggle altogether. The correct solution lies some-

[20] V. Figner, *Polnoye sobraniye sochinenii*, Vol. V (Moscow, 1929), pp. 109–112.

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where between these two extremes, in a combination of the political and social factors. 'This is the view accepted by our faction and our organ.' It is very close to the theories propounded by Marx, who has proved that all social systems are based on economic relationships, but who—unlike many of his pupils—also believes that political authority (as, for example, in the case of the Paris Commune) can be used as the agency of transformation of the social structure. After illustrating this last point with several examples from recent French history Kibalchich arrives at a clear-cut conclusion: 'Nobody can any longer doubt the feasibility of a political revolution which uses the State as a weapon for implementing the economic revolution.'

To be successful, such a revolution must be carried out in accordance with historical development and with the people's own desires. And at this stage Russia's special circumstances come into play. The Russian state, Kibalchich continues, shows very clearly how a political system can exert a crucial *negative* influence upon the social structure. 'The principles of the people's life are diametrically opposed to the principles upon which the present State is founded' (the contradiction between state and *obshchina* becomes the Russian counterpart to Marx's contradiction between productive forces and relations of production). Moreover, unlike Europe the Russian state has made impossible the development of privileged social classes or estates that could serve as its support. So when the super-centralized autocratic state is swept away by the tidal wave of revolution which force will emerge as master of the situation? Certainly not the inchoate and unorganized property-owning classes. 'Only the people and the social-revolutionary party can be capable of determining the social and political systems, after the uprising. Therefore we come, once again, to the same conclusion: the main thrust of our party's destructive activity must be directed, at present and in the future, against the State—the principal, if not the only real force impeding the construction of a better society.' [21]

There is every indication that the majority of *Narodnaya Volya* agreed with Kibalchich's views. At first sight these are neither profound nor original. It had all been said before: Russia's unique revolutionary advantages over the capitalist West; the artificial and essentially fragile nature of the Russian state; the absence of a proper class structure that might otherwise serve as a barrier to revolution; the 'people's' spontaneously socialist psychology; the entirely practicable prospect of an overthrow of the state creating a social and political void which only the revolutionary party could fill; the job of 'bourgeois' reform devolving by default, almost as an aside, upon the socialist revolution. Nothing really new—all the issues had been, and were going to be, repeatedly argued over for decades. What distinguishes the creed of *Narodnaya Volya* from similar *professions de foi* is (a) the studied effort to dissociate it from both the Jacobin and the classical varieties of Populism and to

[21] *Literatura partii Narodnoi Voli*, pp. 336–42.

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align it with Marxist theory, and (b) its implicit acceptance by Marx and Engels.

Four weeks after the publication of Kibalchich's article Alexander II was dead and another month later Kibalchich himself was hanged. The backbone of *Narodnaya Volya* had been broken. But it took a long time for this to be realized, by enemy and friend alike. Marx's ardour for the impending Russian revolution remained undiminished till his death in March 1883. Engels was left the keeper of the conscience, with the self-imposed duty of preserving the heritage intact. In the year of Marx's death he had a long conversation with Gherman Lopatin, just before the latter returned to Russia (in a vain attempt to re-establish *Narodnaya Volya*) and to 20 years in prison. Lopatin recorded the conversation in a letter to another member of the Executive Committee [22]; the correctness of his account was not disputed by Engels when he read it in print. Engels assured Lopatin of his continued faith in the *narodovoltsy*. He had particularly high praise for the letter sent to the new tsar immediately after the act of 1 March 1881: 'Marx and I both thought the Committee's letter to Alexander III was truly splendid in the political sense it displayed no less than in its calm tone. It shows that there are people with statesmanlike minds among the revolutionaries.' As for the general state of Russia, Engels saw it as almost identical with that of France in 1789. There was nothing the tsar could do to prevent a revolution from breaking out in the immediate future. 'The initiative of constructing a new social order belongs rightfully and properly', declared Engels, to Russia. It was a cheering thought, though hardly credible to anyone who, as some Russians were then doing, took a literal approach to the writings of Marx.

IN no other country did orthodox Marxism have greater difficulty in getting off the ground than in Russia, for nowhere else were its opponents sustained by the personal authority of Marx and Engels themselves. That the venture survived and that Marxism in its European version achieved—for a time—a resounding victory over the proponents of 'Russian socialism' was due in large measure to the devotion and the untiring efforts of Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov. But for many years it was heart-breaking, uphill work.

Plekhanov arrived in Geneva in January 1880, leaving behind him the life of a hunted underground revolutionary. He was to stay in the West for 37 years. One issue of *Chernyi Peredel* had just appeared; two more were published in Switzerland (much to Marx's disgust). Then the group petered out, and with it the journal. Like Herzen so many years before, Plekhanov was transformed under the impact of Western Europe. Only in his case it had a totally different effect: instead of confirming his faith in a special Russian path to socialism it convinced him that Russia was inevitably subject to the same historical laws as the West,

[22] The most complete text of Lopatin's letter was published by V. Figner in '*Golos minuvshego*', 1923, No. 2, pp. 146–8. See Volk, op. cit. pp. 436–8.

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and that the road to socialist revolution could lead only through the development of capitalism. Plekhanov had discovered Marx—the old, the real Marx.

Strictly speaking, Plekhanov was familiar with some of Marx's writings even before emigrating. Like other Russian revolutionaries, he held Marx in great respect. But with the deeply-engrained Populism which led him to break away from *Zemlya i Volya* when it began to adopt the method of political terror, he stubbornly refused to believe that political action could lead to the socialist transformation of Russian society. Exposure to Europe, the first-hand experience of political liberty and of legal working-class movements, made him rapidly change his mind. Capitalism, he began to think, must come to Russia, and the people should have a revolutionary party properly equipped for the struggle under these changed circumstances. In January 1881, in the third and last issue of *Chernyi Peredel*, Plekhanov was already writing: 'The representatives of absolute monarchy will be replaced by representatives of the constitutional order, by exponents of the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. The struggle against these will be as inevitable for the people as were its earlier protests against the tyranny of absolutism. . . . It is the bourgeoisie against which we shall have to fight. Its downfall can be brought closer only by the success of social-revolutionary propaganda, agitation and organization among the people.' [23] Upon which *Chernyi Peredel* closed down its activities, to give way to a new type of socialist organization. This, however, as Plekhanov came to discover, was much easier said than done.

Plekhanov must have already to some degree been disillusioned with Populism—it would be difficult otherwise to explain the suddenness of his conversion to Marxism. For Plekhanov, as for *Narodnaya Volya*, the most alluring feature of Marxism was its synthesis of political and social revolution. This offered a key to the solution of the interminable argument between the two wings of the Russian revolutionary movement (Plekhanov's interpretation of the relationship was very different from that of the *narodovoltsy*, but this is hardly surprising—Marxism, then as now, could mean many things to many men). Plekhanov arrived at his moment of truth when reading the *Communist Manifesto* (strange to say, he had never read Marx's most famous book before). Here at last was the solution to Russia's problems. Russian conditions seemed very similar to those of Germany in 1848. Russia, too, would have to undergo a bourgeois revolution and a lengthy period of unfettered capitalist development, creating a new economy, a new society and a new system of relations of production. The old absolutist order would be destroyed by the triumphant bourgeoisie, as had happened everywhere else. But the bourgeoisie would also bring forth its own gravedigger, the industrial proletariat, the only class capable of accomplishing a socialist revolution and establishing a true classless society. The cold and unemotional

[23] G. V. Plekhanov, *Sochineniya*, Vol. I, p. 135.

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Plekhanov was carried away by the magnificent phrases, the passionate conviction, the breath-taking universality of the Marxist analysis. It offered science instead of intuition, facts in place of feelings, certainty as a substitute for conjecture. Russian Populism, with its narrow-minded parochial approach, seemed a very poor thing indeed by comparison.

The long years of failure had prepared the ground for Plekhanov's ready acceptance of Marxism. Going to the people, conspiracy, propaganda, terrorism: everything had been tried, and nothing had worked. Once again it was necessary to start from the beginning, only this time the movement would be based on the coherent, scientific world-outlook it had always lacked before, with such disastrous consequences. Besides, Plekhanov's considerable practical experience of revolutionary work in the field tended to confirm all Marx and Engels had written about the proletariat as the only class capable of evolving a revolutionary consciousness, and the 'idiocy of rural life' having reduced the peasantry to an inert, passive mass as far as revolution was concerned. The proletariat was the sole repository of hope—and that entailed the ineluctability of capitalist development for Russia.

The very same forecast for Russia's future, as Plekhanov now discovered with surprise, had been made several years before by Engels. One of the texts that most decisively influenced Plekhanov's turn towards Marxism was *Soziales in Russland*—Engels's polemic against Tkachev. The powerful logic, the skilfully marshalled arguments completely convinced Plekhanov. He had always been an opponent of Tkachev; for him 'politics' had been epitomized by Tkachev and Nechaev; and now he discovered that there was another kind of revolutionary politics, founded not on conspiracy but on the laws of historical development, encompassing not a small élite but the whole working-class, directed not at a *coup d'état* but at a great popular socialist revolution. The irony of the situation was that by then Marx and Engels had totally revised their views on the Russian revolution and, without explicitly saying so, conceded the argument to Tkachev and *Narodnaya Volya*. But Plekhanov, even when he learned with pain of this backsliding, remained loyal to his fundamentalist Marxism.

Plekhanov is often called 'the father of Russian Marxism'. The description is correct only in a certain sense. Marxism had exerted a substantial intellectual influence in Russia well before Plekhanov's conversion, and had shaped the thinking of many prominent revolutionaries. But none of them had regarded themselves as 'Marxists'. Indeed, few people did, anywhere in the world, during Marx's lifetime. His teachings had not yet acquired the form of a rigid doctrine, a unified and all-embracing body of faith known as 'scientific socialism', subdivided into 'dialectical materialism' and 'historical materialism', neatly classified into laws and categories, providing a coordinated system of answers to every problem under the sun. This reverential orthodoxy hardly corresponded to the approach originally taken by Marx, an iconoclast with a

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restless and supple mind, who did not hesitate to adjust his theory to fit changing circumstances (Russia provided an excellent example of his pragmatic handling of revolutionary politics). One can sympathize with Marx and Engels when, towards the end of their lives, they saw their theories ossify into an inflexible dogma, administered by self-confident and unbending presbyters. In 1890 Engels scathingly wrote to Lafargue: 'In the last two or three years numerous students, *littérateurs* and other *déclassé* young bourgeois have flocked into the party . . . All these gentlemen profess Marxism, but of a kind . . . about which Marx used to say: "In that case I know only that I am not a Marxist myself!" And Marx would probably have described these gentlemen in the words used by Heine of his own imitators: "I sowed dragons and reaped only fleas."'[24] Yet a major part of the responsibility for this ossification of Marxism must fall upon Marx himself—with his intolerance of dissent, his authoritarian disposition, his general insistence that his followers cleave to the path of righteousness.

One such follower was Plekhanov (though Engels's strictures were obviously not meant to apply to a man of his stature). Marxism appealed to Plekhanov because of the breadth of its intellectual approach; both his Russian background and his temperament predisposed him to ready acceptance of the authoritarianism inherent in Marxist doctrine. Plekhanov, the first real Russian Marxist, became the very embodiment of orthodox Marxism.

In the Russian context 'orthodox Marxism', as opposed to the other schools of thought influenced by Marx, meant full agreement with the European interpretation of Marxism, the denial of a specifically Russian path to socialism, the acknowledgment of the universality of the Western historical pattern and the inevitability of capitalist development and bourgeois revolution as preconditions for the eventual proletarian revolution. It was a genuinely revolutionary doctrine—as opposed to later revisionist glosses violently denounced by Plekhanov and the orthodox—but it set its face firmly against 'unscientific' and 'adventurist' trends like Populism, which could only delay the growth of a true working-class socialist movement. As a backward peasant country with hardly any proletariat to speak of, Russia was again relegated to her proper place in the scheme of things, well behind the advanced industrialized nations of the West. Revolution would come, but only when the conditions formulated by Marx were ripe for it. Meanwhile Marxists would work to prepare for the day—primarily by propagating their views as widely as possible.

Plekhanov's importance in Russian history has probably been overrated. It is deliberately magnified by official Soviet historiography, which builds him up as the vital link between Marx and Lenin. His actual achievements, though considerable, should be viewed realistically. He translated many of the works of Marx and Engels and thus

[24] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 254–5.

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made them accessible (somewhat later) to the Russian public. He was himself an important and internationally recognised Marxist theoretician —in other words, a leading exegetist of orthodox Marxism. Some of his books represent significant contributions to Marxist theory. He combined great erudition with brilliant intelligence and a scholarly mind. But similar statements could be made of others in that Golden Age of Marxism around the turn of the century: Plekhanov's claim to lasting greatness rests essentially on the role he played in the development of a Marxist revolutionary movement in Russia.

Plekhanov was the first to undertake a systematic Marxist analysis of the situation in Russia. He conducted it in strictly orthodox terms; Russia, he believed, had already stepped onto the capitalist road, and there was no sense in pretending otherwise. History could not be turned back: its laws applied to Russia no less than to any other country. He did not adapt Marxism to Russia, because he did not think that it could be or should be adapted to suit any particular set of circumstances— immutable social laws could not be bent to serve one's convenience— but neither did he tamper with the evidence. What Plekhanov did was arrange all the relevant facts in their proper Marxist configuration, and fit Russia's social development securely into the Marxist pattern. In this he succeeded superlatively well. Plekhanov's analysis provided Lenin and the Bolsheviks with the general *theoretical* framework indispensable for their activities; they were never to abandon or even modify it to any significant degree, regardless of the stormy vicissitudes of politics. That is the measure of Plekhanov's success. And of his failure —for as the years passed and his view of Russian society gained ever wider acceptance he began increasingly to doubt the applicability of the Marxist method to the Russian past, or, for that matter, the future.

Plekhanov's career as a practical politician is marked by the same ambiguity. He founded the first Russian Marxist group properly to be so called, but it hardly amounted to anything in terms of real influence; other, roughly contemporaneous Marxist groups were far more important, but it was Plekhanov's which was later chosen to be lifted from obscurity by the men who were his bitterest political enemies; he presided over the formation of a united Russian socialist party—only to see it being immediately torn asunder, and to stand aloof from the internecine strife; he cut a great figure at meetings of international socialist organizations, but he never had the backing of a national party of his own. His life ended on a note of the utmost tragedy, as a man once again hounded out of his country—only this time by his own pupils, by Lenin, who had seized power a few months before his death and established a system embodying every principle which he abhorred and against which he had warned—yet professing to be constructed on the basis of Plekhanov's own writings. Like Herzen, Plekhanov realized the truth too late.

In the 1880s Plekhanov was convinced that he had found the truth at last. Marx, he knew, was against applying Marxism to Russia. That

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made matters rather difficult. It may have been only a coincidence, but Plekhanov formed his group, the 'Emancipation of Labour', devoted specifically to this purpose, a few months after Marx's death, in September 1883. The printed notice of the formation of the group and of its publishing enterprise, the Library of Contemporary Socialism, was sent to Engels by Vera Zasulich, together with a letter in which she asked Marx's literary executor for the privilege of publishing the second volume of *Capital*. Engels sent a decidedly cold reply. The political situation in Russia, he informed Zasulich, was now such that the crisis could come at any day. 'I even believe it probable that Russia will achieve freedom of the press earlier than Germany.' In these circumstances the coveted right should belong to Lopatin, who had translated part of the first volume.[25] The clear implications of Engels's letter, its scorn for a fruitless Marxist propaganda venture undertaken on the eve of a real revolution and its open preference for *Narodnaya Volya*, were hardly lost upon Plekhanov. Engels made no other reference to the momentous occasion of the formation of the first Russian Marxist group, apart from a jocular remark, in a letter to Eduard Bernstein written the same day, about poor old Lavrov's chagrin at having lost yet another batch of disciples. Otherwise Engels took no cognizance of the Emancipation of Labour: instead, he continued to cultivate his relationships with the Populists.

One must admire the fortitude with which Plekhanov, rudely cold-shouldered by Marx's acknowledged successor, persevered in his task of bringing Marxism to Russia. At its inception the Emancipation of Labour group numbered only five members: Plekhanov himself, Pavel Axelrod, Vera Zasulich, Lev Deutsch and Vasili Ignatov. Within two years its strength was cut down to three: Ignatov died, and Deutsch was arrested in Germany and extradited to Russia. For the next decade it was these three people—in practical terms Plekhanov and Axelrod alone —who represented what there was of Russian orthodox Marxism. They translated and published the works of Marx and Engels, wrote books and pamphlets of their own. Despite all the rebuffs they were convinced that some day their labours would bear fruit. And they were right.

Plekhanov saw as his first object the refutation of Populism and of the whole concept of a specifically Russian path to socialism. Events, he was convinced, had already proved the fallaciousness of this idea: capitalism had come to Russia, and its development could not be stopped. Nor should it be stopped, even if this were possible, for without capitalism there could be no proletarian revolution. What was now needed was a scientific, theoretical analysis of Russian society that would finally rid the revolutionary movement of its Populist shibboleths. 'Plekhanov's mission—as he conceived it—consisted in carrying out in Russia the fundamental task Marx had accomplished some decades earlier in the West: to effect a transformation of socialism, shifting it from a "utopian" to a "scientific" basis'.[26]

[25] Ibid. Vol. XXVII, p. 335. [26] S. H. Baron, *Plekhanov* (London, 1963), p. 95.

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Narodnaya Volya was in its death-throes, and however deeply Plekhanov, watching its agony from afar, sympathized with his old comrades, he felt he owed a duty to the revolutionary movement that transcended sentiment or personal attachments. The revolution had to be resurrected, and this could be achieved only on the basis of an entirely new approach. Plekhanov's conversion to Marxism, and with it, to political activity, had led to a temporary reconciliation with the remnants of *Narodnaya Volya*. For a time, after the dissolution of *Chernyi Peredel*, the two groups were even planning the joint publication of a new journal called *Vestnik Narodnoi Voli* (Courier of *Narodnaya Volya*). Its editor was to be Lev Tikhomirov, the most uncompromising of the 'politicals' and the last member of the original Executive Committee to remain at large. Plekhanov prepared a long article for the journal's first issue: a detailed and outspokenly Marxist critique of the theory and practice of Populism. Though never noted for his own generosity to dissenters, Plekhanov expected the piece to be published as a legitimate contribution to an important debate. Tikhomirov, supported by Lavrov and a few others, regarded it as little short of treachery towards the memory of their martyrs. The article was rejected—the rift had become complete and final. Shortly afterwards Plekhanov brought it out, under the title *Socialism and Political Struggle*, as a separate pamphlet, the first in his Library of Contemporary Socialism.[27]

Socialism and Political Struggle opened the second of the great debates between Populism and Marxism—only this time, unlike the encounter between Engels and Tkachev, the Marxist case was presented by a Russian. The second round was remarkably similar to the first; what Plekhanov lacked in authority and self-assurance he made up for in better knowledge of Russian reality. Everything Engels had written was now confirmed by practical experience. Populism had been proved wrong: both its classical variety, which denied the role of the state and the importance of politics and saw the revolution purely as a social and economic upheaval (and which, Plekhanov admitted, he had himself shared), and the Jacobin school of *Narodnaya Volya*, with its exclusive concentration on the seizure of political power. The fatal weakness inherent in both main trends of Populism was their lack of a comprehensive theory of society. This had led them to idealize certain superficial features of Russian life, to romanticize the idea of instant insurgency—and to sustain repeated heavy defeats.

'There can be no revolutionary movement without a revolutionary theory', wrote Plekhanov. And the only scientific theory of revolution was that discovered by Marx and Engels. Surely by now it should be clear to all that Marx's laws of economic development applied to Russia just as much as to any other part of the world! True, Plekhanov still allowed for the possibility that Russia might not have to undergo *all* the phases of capitalist development, that some Russian peculiarities

[27] Plekhanov, *Sochineniya*, Vol. II, pp. 25–88.

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were not incompatible with the general Marxist scheme; he even quoted Marx and Engels, in their new Preface to the *Communist Manifesto*, to show that, given the support of a proletarian revolution in the West, the village commune *might* provide the Russian path to socialism (he could hardly do less). These slight concessions to his pre-Marxist past were soon eliminated by Plekhanov, and his later writings revealed no flaws in the immaculateness of his Marxist orthodoxy. But even in this earliest Marxist work Plekhanov unequivocally declared that 'Russian revolutionaries must accept the point of view of Western social-democracy and make a complete break with "insurgency" theories'.

Socialism and Political Struggle was not an abstract theoretical exercise but a revolutionary tract, and Plekhanov's central argument concerned the conditions for a successful revolution. We have always, he wrote, exaggerated our own strength and underestimated the enemy's power of resistance. The time has come to say point-blank that there can be no socialist revolution in Russia in the foreseeable future. Russia's social and economic development had lagged far behind that of the West, and it was ridiculous even to think that she could suddenly outdistance Europe and reach socialism ahead of the West. 'The socialist organization of production presupposes a type of economic relationship which would make this organization the logical conclusion of the country's whole preceding development . . . In present-day Russia the objective social conditions of production are as yet insufficiently developed for socialist organization.' Until the conditions necessary for socialist revolution matured within the body of Russian society the revolutionaries' task would consist of expediting this process and eliminating the obstacles in its path, 'and not of inventing socialist experiments and vivisections, the outcome of which is always highly uncertain, to say the least'.

A bleak outlook for an ardent young revolutionary. But what was the alternative? The seizure of power by a revolutionary government and the introduction of socialism by decree, as envisaged by *Narodnaya Volya*? Plekhanov dismissed the idea as 'fantasy'. Such a government, were it ever to be established, would no doubt represent itself as the dictatorship of the working-class. 'But the dictatorship of a class is as remote from the dictatorship of a group of *raznochinets* revolutionaries as heaven and earth'. A dictatorship of the proletariat can only be brought about by a highly developed and politically experienced working-class, liberated from ancient prejudices, educated in socialist ideas and conscious of its own power. 'But *such* a proletariat would obviously *never permit* the seizure of power even by the sincerest of well-wishers . . . A proletariat which has understood the conditions necessary for its emancipation and achieved the requisite maturity will take state power into its own hands.'

Plekhanov did not, either then or at any later time, even try to explain how this consummation was to come about, how the proletariat would

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succeed in operating its dictatorship *by the class as a whole*, without allowing power to be exercised by individuals—as power has been exercised, in one way or another, in every known type of polity. Not only did he not face the issue—he simply refused to recognize its existence. The laws of history were to take their course, and when conditions were ripe a proletarian revolution would take place, establish its dictatorship and proceed to create a classless society. That, as far as he was concerned, was the end of it. In actual fact, of course, it was not: Plekhanov had merely set a conundrum which neither he nor any of his followers was able to solve. To be fair to Plekhanov, the same lofty approach to practical problems of power and administration under the new order had been taken by Marx and Engels. Lavrov and Tkachev, for all their theoretical limitations, at least discerned the possible importance of the human factor in the running of the revolutionary government: Marxism has never been able to come to terms with this very unscientific consideration.

Yet Plekhanov did possess a strangely prophetic insight into the nature of the Russian revolution that was denied Marx and Engels, for all their superior intellectual equipment. In *Socialism and Political Struggle* he first voiced an apprehension which, however implausible he found it, he was to repeat several times in the course of the years. What would happen, he asked, if a small revolutionary group did, contrary to all expectations, actually seize and retain power? Two possibilities were open: 'Either it will have to stand by, helplessly watching the gradual decay of the "economic equality" it had established, or it will be compelled to *organize* national production.' The revolutionary government would be more likely to choose the second path. In that case, because of Russia's backwardness, 'it will have to seek salvation in the ideals of a "patriarchal and authoritarian communism", the only modification of these ideals being that national production will be managed, not by the Peruvian "Sons of the Sun" and their officials, but by a socialist caste'. But no—Plekhanov immediately cast off the horrifying vision: the Russian people even in their present state would not stand for 'Inca communism', and such a thing was patently impossible anywhere in the enlightened nineteenth century or the even more highly civilized twentieth century. There was nothing for it but the hard slog of fighting for political freedom within a bourgeois system and educating the proletariat for a proper socialist revolution.

PLEKHANOV probably intended to provoke a general debate that would settle, once and for all (on a theoretical level), the vexed question of Russia's future social and revolutionary development. He did not have to wait long. A few months later Tikhomirov published a lengthy pamphlet, *What Do We Expect of the Revolution?*, strongly attacking Plekhanov's Marxist interpretation of Russian reality. In 1885 Plekhanov replied with a full-scale book, *Our Differences*—

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perhaps his most important and original contribution to the Marxist cause.[28] Russian Marxism should, properly speaking, be dated from the appearance of *Our Differences* rather than from the formation of the Emancipation of Labour group. The book contained every essential aspect of the Marxist case as it was to be argued (by all factions) over the next 30 years; there was very little, apart from detail, that Lenin and other later luminaries could add to Plekhanov's theoretical analysis. Lenin himself always generously acknowledged his movement's profound debt to Plekhanov's pioneering work; to this day *Our Differences* is enshrined in the Soviet Union as the foundation-stone of Russian Marxism.

The debate between Plekhanov and Tikhomirov is generally regarded as marking the decisive, if not final, victory of Marxism over Populism. This judgment is correct, in a certain sense—in the same sense in which it can be said that Engels had defeated Tkachev 10 years earlier. The debate followed the main lines of the Engels-Tkachev polemic: it covered roughly the same ground, and the opponents used arguments very similar to those of their predecessors. The resemblance was deliberately heightened by Plekhanov's copious use of quotations from *Soziales in Russland*. The antagonists, though rather lesser men than the original pair, were both powerful polemicists, fully conversant with the matter under debate. They had the advantage of being able to draw fresh arguments from another decade of Russian development, especially eventful in the revolutionary field. And at the end of the day the verdict must be the same: Plekhanov won the (theoretical) debate with flying colours, but—in the long run—lost the argument. For all his erudition Plekhanov proved quite wrong in his main predictions for Russia's future. Tikhomirov was the better forecaster. But legend, not fact, is the stuff of much of twentieth-century history, and legend has it that, just as Marxism was finally triumphant in Russia, so along the road Plekhanov won a famous victory over the Populists.

Our Differences set out to prove that Russian history was subject to the universal Marxist laws, and that capitalism was developing in Russia just as it had developed earlier in the West. The Populist assumptions about the *obshchina* leading directly to socialism were fallacious. Plekhanov examined the evolution of the basic Populist ideas through the writings of Herzen, Chernyshevsky, and Bakunin. He did not think much of any of them except Chernyshevsky (neither had Marx), but even Chernyshevsky, despite his great merits, had been wrong on the main issues. Then he came to Tkachev. In essence, the whole of Plekhanov's argument was conducted against Tkachev and Russian 'Blanquism'. The Populist-propagandists, or classical Populists, no longer presented a serious ideological challenge: they had faded away, or gone over to Marxism (like Plekhanov himself), or ceased being revolutionary.

[28] Ibid. pp. 89–356.

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Tkachevism was another matter. Plekhanov, with the acute political perception which made him such a formidable figure, had seen that Tkachev was the crucial link between the old and the new Populism; that this man—derided by all, living in isolation, lacking any organized following—had had a decisive impact upon the young 'politicals', in particular on *Narodnaya Volya*. Unlike later historians, bemused by years of ideological hair-splitting, Plekhanov recognized Tkachevism as the theoretical creed of *Narodnaya Volya*.

'The literary activity of *Narodnaya Volya*', he wrote, 'consists of reiterating, with various modulations, the teachings of Tkachev. The only difference is that Tkachev placed "the present critical moment" in the early seventies, while the writers of *Narodnaya Volya* locate it in the late seventies–early eighties. Russian Blanquism, completely lacking in what the Germans call "historical sense", has been shifting and will, with the greatest of ease, go on shifting its idea of a "moment" specially propitious for the social revolution, from one decade to another. Having been proved a false prophet in the eighties, it will stubbornly renew its prophecies in 10, or 20, or 30 years' time.' In the light of later events this last statement of Plekhanov's can hardly be called a false prophecy.

Plekhanov was likewise right in discerning as the central and most distinctive tenet of the *narodovolets* programme, not political terrorism but the seizure of political power. That was what made it so attractive: it combined the traditional Populist belief in a special Russian path to socialism with acceptance of the need for political action and with a clear-cut concept of revolution. Why, even Lavrov, the erstwhile determined foe of Blanquism, was now standing shoulder to shoulder with Tikhomirov—and Plekhanov got a lot of fun out of quoting, with a great show of approbation, from Lavrov's philippics of long ago against Tkachev. That was why Populism in its new, political incarnation could only be refuted by Marxism, which possessed most of its attractions, together with the added advantage of a solid 'scientific' base.

PLEKHANOV took up Tikhomirov's challenge on the three central issues facing the Russian revolutionary movement. The first was the question of whether capitalism was an historically progressive force, a universally necessary precondition of the socialist revolution. Tikhomirov had flatly denied this:

> With regard to the development of large-scale production one is entitled to doubt whether the paths of history to date have been the best possible and the only possible ones for all nations and all times. . . . It is quite true that in the history of certain European nations capitalism, having created a multitude of evils and misfortunes, has also among its consequences brought forth something good, namely large-scale production, which has to some degree prepared the ground for socialism. But from this it by no means follows that other countries, such as Russia, might not find other ways for the development of large-scale production. . . . Everything

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> leads one to the conclusion that the method of collectivizing labour invented by capitalism is one of the worst methods imaginable: whilst on the one hand it did in many respects prepare the ground for a possible socialist system, its other aspects considerably retard the coming of socialism.

Such statements were fairly easy to refute for a well-read Marxist —in theoretical terms, of course. Marx and Engels, explained Plekhanov patiently, had proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that capitalism, for all its evils—and who had done more to expose its evils than they?—was an historically progressive force. Not only because it established industries, built railways, and furrowed the oceans with its steamships, not even because it replaced an antiquated and obsolete feudal system, but above all because it was the indispensable precursor of socialism. The preconditions for socialism could mature only within a capitalist order. Plekhanov's case was skilfully argued, and illustrated with numerous historical examples and quotations from the *Communist Manifesto* and other Marxist writings. Naturally, he continued, history does not repeat itself, and the development of capitalism and the triumph of socialism in Russia would not be simple repetitions of similar processes elsewhere. For one thing, a proletarian revolution in England or France would greatly shorten the reign of capitalism throughout the civilized world. 'But all that belongs to the future, removed from us by a more or less lengthy period of time in the course of which our capitalism can become and, as we see, is already becoming the omnipotent ruler of Russia.'

This last was the crux of Plekhanov's argument. Anyone could say that capitalism played an historically progressive role: the obvious answer was that such a role remained strictly limited to the West, where capitalism actually existed. Tikhomirov had poured scorn on all those who believed 'that in order to create the material conditions for the possibility of a socialist system Russia is obliged to pass through the stage of capitalism'. The time-honoured Populist case could be demolished only by proving that capitalism already was the dominant force in Russia's economic and social life. This Plekhanov now proceeded to do. Must Russia go through the school of capitalism? he asked. Step by step, using every piece of available evidence, citing statistical handbooks, governmental legislation, sociological surveys and official publications (though bemoaning the absence of anything like the English Blue Books that had made Marx's task so much easier than his own), Plekhanov showed that capitalism had already taken root in the Russian economy. Tikhomirov had himself stated that there were 800 thousand industrial workers in Russia; although Plekhanov believed the real figure to be much higher he was ready to accept Tikhomirov's statistic as proof that the creation of an industrial proletariat had passed the point of no return. He compiled quite an impressive picture of the growth of Russian industrial production—predominantly in textile manufacturing, but with a healthy start being made in heavy industry. As for

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the village commune, that repository of Populist hopes, Plekhanov had become convinced that it was already well on the way to disintegration, under the inexorable pressure of the profit motive and of new agricultural techniques. The principle of the regular redistribution of land was increasingly falling into abeyance and communal land passing into *de facto* private ownership.

'If, having said all this', concluded Plekhanov, 'we were to ask once again: "Will Russia pass through the school of capitalism?", our unhesitating answer would be another question: why should she not complete a school which she is *already attending*?' Capitalism, in short, had come to stay, and it was futile to argue about the possibilities of avoiding or bypassing it.

Plekhanov's facts (allowing for the imperfection of Russian statistics) were essentially correct. So too, as the ensuing 30 years proved, were his predictions regarding rapid industrial progress and the development of rural property relationships. Yet there was a crucial flaw in his argument, deriving from the over-optimistic economic determinism typical of almost all post-Marxian Marxists and especially so of Plekhanov. History would have to run its course: the material means of production would develop, and as a result feudalism would be supplanted by capitalism, the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie become proletarianized, old social patterns and ways of thought be destroyed and replaced by proletarian class-consciousness, etc. That was what had occurred in the West, the homeland of the industrial society, and since industrialization was being carried out in Russia by the same methods, with the use of the technology and machinery perfected in the West, it stood to reason that the results would also be the same. In our time this very idea has been widely propagated—with far less justification, and by non-Marxists at that—as the doctrine of 'convergence', the idea that any industrial society is much the same as any other. What matters is the fact of industrialization. But that is not how things happen in the real, as opposed to the theoretical, world. For one thing, Russia had never known the feudal order: over the centuries she had evolved a social structure and a system of institutions peculiarly her own and to which Western criteria did not necessarily apply; she had a considerable experience in refashioning Western acquisitions and adjusting them to her own unique character. Plekhanov came to understand this better in later years, but Tkachev and his followers, limited though their outlook may have been, had an instinctive awareness of the great distance separating their country from the European model.

The future of Russia, Plekhanov firmly declared, would bring 'first of all the triumph of the bourgeoisie and the beginning of the political and economic emancipation of the working-class'. That was not how Tikhomirov saw it. His analysis of the Russian social structure and hence of the coming revolution was practically identical with Tkachev's: 'Our supreme authority, according to popular belief, is representative of the

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whole people, and not just of some social class. The Tsars' power has been maintained only due to the steadfastness of this conviction.' The transition from the idea of the sovereignty of the Tsar to that of the people would not be too difficult to effect. In France, Tikhomirov continued, the people had gone on directly from an absolute monarchy to the concept of the *peuple souverain*, but the actual implementation of popular sovereignty had been prevented by the existence of a well-entrenched bourgeoisie. Russia had no bourgeoisie, and therefore nothing could thwart the triumph of the revolution—'unless autocracy survives long enough for the bourgeoisie to acquire sufficient strength for the reorganization of all our production along capitalist lines'. The contingency was fairly unlikely: 'Russia in her present chaotic state can hardly wait until the bourgeoisie constitutes itself into a force capable of reducing this chaos to some order, even a bourgeois order . . . If the present system collapses before this happens then the bourgeoisie has no chance of seizing political power.'

Plekhanov was at his most ironic in dealing with Tikhomirov's unscientific flights of fancy. He could not help pitying a person so blinded by his obsessions as actually to believe that the victory of socialism was easier in backward, semi-Asiatic Russia than in the developed, capitalist West. 'The subjects of the Persian Shah, the Egyptian Khedive and the Chinese Emperor have the same absurd notions about their supreme authority as the Russian peasants. Does it follow then that the Persians, the Egyptians and the Chinese will go over with the same ease to the "concept of the *peuple souverain*"? If so, then the further eastward we move the nearer we come to popular sovereignty.'

Irony is a dangerous weapon: it can play strange tricks with those who use it. Plekhanov thought that by his *reductio ad absurdum* he had exposed the utter preposterousness of Tikhomirov's ideas. In reality the joke was on him. However ridiculous this may have sounded in the ordered, rational, European world in which Marxism was born and flourished, Plekhanov's mock forecast has come true, almost to the letter: it is the subjects of the Russian Tsar, the Chinese Emperor, the Egyptian Khedive and of sundry other Asiatic potentates who have established socialist systems on one or another Marxist model—while the industrial proletariat of the West lost any revolutionary spirit it may once have possessed.

In the final argument, concerning the feasibility and probable outcome of a revolutionary coup, 'science' was once again opposed to 'intuition'. Tikhomirov had written: 'There can be no doubt that what determines the question of the seizure of power by any revolutionary force is, above all, whether the existing government is sufficiently disorganized, debilitated and unpopular. If all these conditions exist then a *coup d'état* presents nothing impossible or even particularly difficult.' The seizure of power by the revolutionary party, Tikhomirov concluded, would become the starting-point for the 'socialist organization of Russia'.

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To Plekhanov's mind this was not just nonsense but dangerous nonsense. The Blanquist coup envisaged by Tikhomirov would be a travesty of a real socialist revolution. No Marxist could have anything to do with such a thing: 'The social-democrat wants the worker *to make* his revolution himself, the Blanquist requires the worker *to support* a revolution begun and led on his behalf and in his name by others.' Tikhomirov had promised that the provisional revolutionary government would not cling on to power but, after expropriating all large-scale property, would hand it over to a freely elected popular assembly, which could then determine policy in accordance with the people's expressed wishes. Plekhanov, orthodox Marxist that he was, rejected the possibility of a minority coup with a democratic *dénouement*. Were the revolution to take place while Russia still remained a backward peasant nation the 'people', i.e. the peasantry, though warmly welcoming the confiscation of landlords' estates, would certainly not vote in favour of introducing a communist economic system. Instead they would happily settle down to private farming, to extracting the maximum profit, to exploiting each other, and to a new pattern of inequality. No revolutionary government could allow this to happen, and therefore, lacking a mass working-class base, it would have to retain dictatorial control. And once again Plekhanov saw the realization of his disturbing vision: 'Once accomplished, the revolution could result in a political monstrosity similar to the ancient Chinese or Peruvian empires, or in other words in a renovated tsarist despotism with a communist lining.' Whichever way one looked at it, therefore, socialism could only be established by the proletariat—the product and the eventual master of collectivized industrial production.

LOOKING back at the great debate between Marxism and Populism from the vantage point of the present day we can see that, as so often happens, both sides were proved right, each in its own peculiar way. The two prophecies merged together in 1917. But at the time there seemed little doubt as to the winner. Tikhomirov's emotional appeal to an heroic tradition and an ineffectual faith was no match for Plekhanov's cold logic and 'scientific' analysis. Populist theory was demolished. Or so it appeared on the surface.

Curiously enough, *Our Differences* was least appreciated in the quarter where it might have been expected to arouse the greatest enthusiasm. Engels had shown no interest in the activities of the Russian Marxists, and Plekhanov could hardly have expected him to give the book his stamp of approval. The usually haughty and aloof Plekhanov was frankly terrified of Engels. The two men had no direct contact prior to a brief meeting in 1889; it was only another four years later that Plekhanov plucked up the courage to open a correspondence—invariably addressing Engels as 'Dear Teacher', until the old man irritably told him to cut out the nonsense. In 1885, at the time of the publication of *Our Differences*, Plekhanov wistfully wrote to Axelrod: 'Never mind,

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don't give up—some day, I am sure, all will be well, and we shall travel together to London to report to the Chief [i.e. Engels]'.[29] It all seemed a fairly remote hope then; Plekhanov did not even dare send Engels his book directly, but only through an intermediary in the person of Zasulich (whose great revolutionary reputation assured her easy access to Engels and other socialist leaders).

Engels's reaction to *Our Differences* was frigid, almost hostile; it must have surpassed poor Plekhanov's worst forebodings. His reply to Zasulich was an astonishing document—an outspoken defence of revolutionary pragmatism against the most hallowed precepts of Marxist theory.[30] It began with a cursory expression of his pride at seeing a Marxist party established among the revolutionary youth of Russia. Then, in considerable detail, it explained why Engels was giving his whole-hearted support to the adversaries of this party.

Marx's theory of history, wrote Engels, provided the cardinal means for discovering the correct revolutionary tactic. This should be done by applying the theory to the concrete economic and political circumstances of any given country. Naturally, to find the solution one should be familiar with all these circumstances: 'As for me, I know too little about the present situation in Russia to set myself up as a competent judge of specific questions of the tactics to be followed there at any particular moment.' Nor, continued Engels, was he *au fait* with the policies of the revolutionary party—he had had hardly any information about this from any of his Russian friends for many years. Though the last assertion was not, strictly speaking, true, Engels's cautious attitude could well have been excused by an understandable reluctance to become embroiled in Russian *émigré* quarrels. Yet, having made his disclaimer, Engels immediately plunged into an impassioned harangue on the unique opportunity presented to Russia by history, a harangue that left no doubt as to his views on the Russian revolution:

> Everything that I know or think I know about the situation in Russia leads me to believe that the Russians are approaching their 1789: the revolution *must* break out within a definite period of time, but it *might* break out any day. In these circumstances the country is like a charged grenade which only requires a fuse to set it off. Especially since the 13th of March [1 March 1881 old style: the assassination of Alexander II. T. S.]. This is one of those exceptional cases when a handful of people can *make* a revolution. In other words, by a small push they can bring down a whole system which is at present barely maintaining an uncertain balance, . . . and by a single act, insignificant in itself, liberate explosive forces which it would then be impossible to tame. And if ever the Blanquist fantasy of convulsing an entire society by means of a small conspiracy had any chance of success then the place is undoubtedly Petersburg. Once the gunpowder is lit, once the forces are freed and the people's energy transformed from potential into kinetic . . .

[29] *Perepiska G. V. Plekhanova i P. B. Axelroda*, Vol. I (Moscow, 1925), p. 21.
[30] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 461–3.

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then the people who have lit the fuse will be thrown aside by the explosion, which will prove to be a thousand times stronger than they, and will seek egress for itself wherever it can, depending on the economic forces and resistances.

Suppose these people believe that they can seize power. Well, what of it? Let them just make the breach which will destroy the dam—the flood will soon put an end to their illusions. But suppose these illusions will further strengthen their will-power: would that give us any cause for complaint? People who boast that they *have made* a revolution always realize the next day that they did not know what they were doing, that the revolution they *had made* was quite different from the one they intended to make. This is what Hegel called the irony of history, an irony which few historical figures have managed to avoid . . .

In my opinion what Russia needs most is a jolt that would set the revolution off. Whether the signal is given by one or the other faction, whether this takes place under one or another flag—I attach little importance to all this. If it is a court conspiracy then it will be swept away the very next day. A country where the situation is so charged with tension; where revolutionary elements have accumulated to such a degree; where the economic condition of the vast mass of the population becomes more and more intolerable every day; where every stage of social development is represented, from the primitive village commune to modern large-scale industry and moguls of finance; and where all these contradictions are forcibly repressed by a despotism that has no equals, a despotism that is becoming more and more intolerable to the youth, the embodiment of the nation's intelligence and dignity—when 1789 comes to such a country then 1793 will not be slow to follow.

ENGELS'S letter of 23 April 1885 to Vera Zasulich is a key document towards understanding the development of revolutionary Marxism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Yet it has never been accorded its rightful place; historians, for a variety of reasons, have evaded the issues it poses. It is never properly discussed even in specialist works devoted to the period in question or the personalities involved. Thus, the author of the first full-length biography of Plekhanov goes to considerable effort to steer clear of the letter: it is only mentioned in passing as having been 'notable for its ambivalence' (the last word, one would think, to describe Engels's trenchant observations), and not even vouchsafed the dignity of direct quotation.[31] Not that the letter itself is unknown to students of Marxism—pieces of it are cited quite often, especially the passage dealing with the irony of history. It is the letter as a whole that remains ignored.

This studied disregard might be justified in the case of a fleeting *obiter dictum*—as it is, far too many elaborate theoretical edifices are constructed upon chance remarks of Marx or Engels—but in fact Engels was giving voice to views which he and Marx had held and expressed

[31] Baron, op. cit. p. 123.

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consistently since 1877. These were the mature conclusions of a man at the height of his intellectual powers.

Engels's statement carries far-reaching implications. Not only was it a deliberate rebuff to Plekhanov—it was a straightforward acceptance of Tkachev's Jacobin thesis, which had been the object of Engels's savage attack 10 years before. Engels bluntly advocated a Blanquist coup as the best and the most likely solution to Russia's problems. An exquisite irony: the co-founder of Marxism vehemently defending Blanquism from its Marxist critics! Engels accepted every essential feature of the Jacobin and *narodovolets* outlook: the glorification of youth, the cult of will-power, the primacy of politics over economics, the advantages of backwardness. He went even further: it did not really matter, he said, who made the revolution and with what purpose. Russia was pregnant with revolution, and if theory was an obstacle to delivery then theory should be cast aside. Engels put it even more ruthlessly in private conversation: what Russia needed, he remarked in 1885, was 'not a programme but a revolution'.[32] Revolution always took precedence over theory with Marx and Engels, who loved to quote Goethe:

> Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie
> Und grün des Lebens goldner Baum.

(All theory, dear friend, is grey, but the golden tree of life springs ever green.)

Some authors believe that Engels desired a revolution in Russia merely because it would spark off a conflagration in the West.[33] Engels's letter to Zasulich gives no indication of any such thing; nor, with the single exception of the 'official' 1882 Preface to the *Communist Manifesto*, do any of his or Marx's remarks on Russia during this period. In 1885 Engels was not even concerned with the theoretical ramifications of the future of the *obshchina*. What did it matter? Only the revolution counted—that, and nothing else. If its leaders had the determination and strength to impose their will upon the revolution, well and good—if not, it would find its own ways, and what they were, no one could foretell. Let the revolution begin: that was all he desired.

However, towards the end of his life Engels had himself reluctantly returned to more conventional doctrine. His enthusiasm for the Russian revolution gradually subsided. The harsh facts had to be faced: there was no revolutionary situation in Russia, and the revolutionary movement had been destroyed. From the mid-eighties Russia was quiescent as she had never been for 30 years. There was nothing left for Engels but reconcile himself to yet another disappointment, the latest of so many. It took him several years to accept Plekhanov's Marxist thesis on the inevitability of a slow process of capitalist development for Russia; only in 1892 could he bring himself to write sadly to Danielson:

[32] J. L. H. Keep, *The Rise of Social Democracy in Russia* (Oxford, 1963), p. 19.
[33] Ibid.

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> I am afraid we shall now have to think of your *obshchina* as a dream of the irretrievable past, and base our future calculations on a capitalist Russia. We shall have certainly thus lost a great opportunity, but there is nothing one can do against the economic facts of life . . . Whether we like them or not, these facts will remain in existence, and the sooner we discard our likes and dislikes the better able we will be to judge both the facts and their consequences . . . I do not see how the results of the industrial revolution that is taking place before our eyes in Russia can be in any way different from what has happened or is happening in England, Germany, America . . . Capitalist production is preparing its own doom, and you can be assured that it will be the same in Russia.[34]

So convinced had Engels now become—to no small degree under the influence of Plekhanov's writings—of the inescapable nature of prolonged capitalist development for Russia that in 1894 he republished the full text of his polemic against Tkachev, together with a Postscript in which he comfortably concluded that all his 20 year-old arguments against the ideas of a Blanquist coup and of Russia achieving socialism earlier than the West had withstood the test of time. He had some explaining to do —it was sufficiently well-known that in the intervening period he and Marx had undergone a change of heart. This Engels now attributed to the fact that in 1877 there had been two actual governments in Russia (a state of affairs, one might think, similar to that described in 1917 by Lenin as 'dual power'): the governments of the Tsar and the Executive Committee. The latter's power was growing daily, and there was good reason to expect a revolution at any moment. Hence the about-turn performed by Marx and Engels. Engels made no reference to his own recent Blanquist phase, when he had implicitly accepted Tkachev's analysis, and dismissed the *narodovoltsy* as brave but sadly misguided men: 'These people, who numbered only a few hundred, but who by their self-sacrifice and courage reduced Tsarist absolutism to a state where it already had to think about the possibility and the conditions of surrender—people like that will not be taken by us before a tribunal for believing their Russian nation to be the chosen people of the social revolution. But this does not by any means lead us to share their illusions. The time for chosen peoples is irrevocably past.'[35]

All that was now done with. Yet even though Engels had returned from his ideological wanderings back to rigid Marxist ground he retained some sentimental attachment to the faded hopes of yesteryear. To the end of his days he stubbornly refused to make public statements critical of contemporary Populism.

Twenty-seven years later, Lenin, the man who had led the Russian revolution to victory, lay on his death bed, drawing up the balance-sheet of his five years in power, surveying the achievements and follies of his revolution, ruminating on its unfathomable ways. An orthodox Marxist

[34] K. Marx, F. Engels, *Sochineniya*, Vol. XXIX, pp. 38, 65, 129–30.
[35] Ibid. Vol. XVI, part 2, p. 399.

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had just published a work criticizing him for having embarked on a revolution in a country manifestly unprepared for one—and the dying Lenin, in one of his last notes, replied by quoting Napoleon's maxim: *On s'engage et puis . . . on voit.* That was how he had done it, and that was how Engels had once expected it to be done.

Since 1917 the point has often been made that Lenin carried out the Bolshevik revolution in violation of the basic principles of Marxism. Missing from this generally accepted picture is the simple fact that this violation of the basic principles of Marxism was first proposed and justified—specifically and exclusively for Russia—by none other than Marx and Engels themselves.

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The Strange Case of the Comintern

Theodore Draper

IN the past decade, there have appeared what—in this era of the Pentagon Papers—might be called the Comintern Papers. Hundreds of pages of hitherto unknown documents, correspondence, and even a private diary or notebook have turned up. Other bits and pieces have gradually emerged. Key events, of which we formerly knew nothing, can now be studied in two or three different versions.

Almost as strange as the unheralded appearance of these formerly unimaginable new sources has been the apparent lack of interest in them. The failure to pay more attention to them reflects, I believe, a persistent neglect of two subjects that deserve far more scholarly concern than they have received—the Communist International and Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin.

The Communist International or Comintern may well be the most important, least studied historical phenomenon of the twentieth century. It had its roots in the past, of course, but with the exception of fascism, no other movement has been so much a child of this century. The defeat of fascism and the expansion of communism as a result of the second world war made the latter incomparably the larger and more durable force. The rise of American power has been a different, more traditional phenomenon. The so-called Third World movements are far more dispersed and still have to show how much staying-power they have and what they can accomplish beyond their national borders.

The communist movement, in one form or another, now holds power in 14 countries with a total population of one billion people—a third of the world's population.[1] Excluding both Communist China and Soviet Russia, their total population still comes to about 150 million people, almost the combined population of West Germany, France, and Great Britain. The number of parties has almost doubled in the past 40 years—from 47 in 1928 to 57 in 1935, 61 in 1943 (when the Comintern was officially dissolved), and 88 in 1969. In the 30 years from 1939 to 1969, the membership figures rose from about 3·3 million to 40,000,000 in the communist countries; from 500,000 to 2,500,000 in non-communist Europe; from 20,000 to 650,000 in non-communist continental Asia and Japan; from 180,000 to 343,000 in North and South America; and from 5,000 to 60,000 in Africa.[2] Even if these figures should be cut by a third

[1] They are the USSR, eight East European countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia), China, two other Asian countries (Mongolia and North Korea), one Southeast Asian country (North Vietnam), and one Latin American country (Cuba).

[2] These official Soviet figures were presented by Boris Ponomaryov, *World Marxist Review*, February 1969, p. 10. Some pre-1943 figures differ but not significantly. The 1972 survey of *World Strength of the Communist Party Organizations*, issued

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or even a half, this is still a most formidable movement, divided as it may be. No other movement on the horizon for the rest of this century promises to be larger, stronger, or more widespread.

One reason for the relative neglect of the Comintern has been the common belief that it was merely a pawn or auxiliary of the Soviet state. This view was expressed in a typical way by Franz Borkenau, whose standard work in this field taught that the Comintern was for most of its existence mainly 'an instrument in the Russian factional struggles' and 'an instrument of Russian foreign policy'.[3] But if world communism was merely an auxiliary or instrument of Soviet Russia, why not concentrate on the real thing? This is precisely what happened. As a result, we have had a surfeit of 'Russian studies' and a scarcity of Comintern studies. If any attention was paid to the Comintern, it was mainly to show how it had become a shadow on a world scale of whatever was happening in Russia. As long as Stalinism seemed to be the end of the road, historians tended to emphasize those aspects of world communism which led to Stalinism.

Was this view wrong? I do not think so. The Comintern did actually become an auxiliary of Soviet Russia. But this view was right from a necessarily limited historical perspective, that of regnant Stalinism. As long as Stalin lived, Soviet supremacy was so great that the Yugoslav breakaway of 1948 seemed to be a singular aberration and even the Chinese Communist victory the following year could not shake the prevailing view. The question was not merely an academic or historical one. On 12 January 1950, the late Secretary of State Dean Acheson made a major speech, primarily known for having apparently delimited the United States' 'defensive perimeter' prior to the Korean war. Another dictum in this speech attracted much less attention but may have had an even more far-reaching effect. Mr. Acheson held that world communism was merely 'the most subtle instrument of Soviet foreign policy that has ever been devised'. In his memoirs, he referred complacently to this very passage as if nothing had changed 19 years later.[4] This premise about world communism helped to bring about US intervention in Vietnam, which former Secretary of State Dean Rusk tried repeatedly to justify on the ground that the United States was really fighting Russia or Russia and China.

But now things have gone so far that communist polycentrism has become one of the pillars of the 'Nixon doctrine'.[5] With Russia and China deadly enemies, Yugoslavia more than ever independent, Rumania

by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, gave the figures as 44·4 million members in the 14 communist-ruled countries, and 2·8 million in the non-communist countries, a total increase of about 500,000 since 1970.

[3] F. Borkenau, *The Communist International* (London: Faber, 1938), p. 419. This book was issued in the United States in 1939 as *World Communism* (Norton). It was reissued by Ann Arbor Paperbacks, University of Michigan Press, in 1962.

[4] Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (New York: Norton, 1969), p. 356.

[5] *US Foreign Policy for the 1970s: Building for Peace*, A Report to the Congress by Richard Nixon (25 February 1971), p. 11.

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perhaps a little less so, Cuba a distant, heteromorphic member of the family, no one in his right mind regards world communism as solely an emanation and instrument of Soviet Russia. Borkenau and his followers were able to see only two stages in the development of world communism—a relatively short, Leninist stage devoted to world revolution, and a much longer, Stalinist stage dedicated to the greater glory of Soviet Russia. We are now in a third stage, characterized by the expansion but also the fragmentation, diversification, and perhaps—we cannot as yet be sure how or how much—ultimate transformation of world communism.

THE historical problem is now not only how to explain the change from the first stage to the second, but also to explain the change from the second to the third. The second stage must have had deep roots in the first one, but the third must also have had some roots in both the first and second. Or, to put it another way, the first stage must have contained the roots of both the second and third. A new perspective, born out of a new historical reality, demands a restudy and a rethinking of the entire process, and most of all of the early, seminal years. This task could not have been faced much earlier because those who lived in the second stage could not put themselves in the third. History, after all, sets the tasks for historians, and it is historical change which makes those tasks ever-new and ever-renewing.

The Comintern was the seed-bed, the general staff, and the training school of the international movement for its first quarter of a century. Until its Russification and Stalinization, it was far from being the monolithic, homogeneous organization that it aspired to be. For at least 10 years, it was unable to suppress a remarkable volume and variety of dissent, heresy, and factionalism, openly expressed. It is true that dissenters and heresiarchs were constantly being expelled; it is also true that there were very many to expel and that they figured very prominently in the records of the early years. They were the forebears and predecessors of the 'right' and 'left' communist tendencies and regimes which exist today. In embryo, a wide range of communist variants was contained in the first stage, suppressed in the second, and resurrected in the third. There is far more to the old heretics, deviationists, and apostates than dead history. The day may yet come when Soviet Russia will be considered a phase—a massive one, to be sure, but still a phase—of world communism.

A restudy and a rethinking are all the more urgent in view of the appearance of the new material. Most of it deals with the 1920s and especially with the Bukharinist period at the end of the decade. Of all the great Bolshevik leaders, the two Comintern leaders, Zinoviev and Bukharin, have been most neglected. Grigori Zinoviev served as head of the Comintern from its foundation in 1919 through most of 1926. Bukharin succeeded him and effectively held the top office, though not the title, until the end of 1928. A reassessment of Bukharin's career

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far exceeds the bounds of this preliminary attempt to restudy and rethink a portion of Comintern history. But I think enough will be shown to suggest that the version of him in the existing literature needs a complete overhaul. If it could be so wrong about his role in the Comintern, it can be wrong about a good many other things.[6]

What intrigued me most was the new light cast on what is known as the 'third period' in communist history. Extending officially from 1928 to 1934, it represented the inception of full-fledged Stalinism in the international movement. The new material is most illuminating for the immediately preceding period, 1926 to 1928, when Bukharin headed the Comintern. To my astonishment, a study of the new sources—which led to a restudy of the old—revealed that the origins of the 'third period' had been systematically misunderstood and misinterpreted. This period is, to my mind, worth studying for its own sake, but it also offers a rare case study of mythology in the guise of history and a remarkable object lesson in the treacherous nature of political labels. Seldom has the disparity between what allegedly happened and what actually happened been so flagrant.

IN the communist analysis of the post-first world war era, the first period began with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and ended with the abortive Hamburg uprising in October 1923. It was summed up in the phrase 'revolutionary wave'. The second period extended from the end of 1923 to some time in 1928. It was marked by the relative recovery or, as the communists preferred to call it, the 'partial stabilization' of capitalism. Then came the third period which was supposed to signify the end of capitalist stabilization and the renewal of the revolutionary wave. It should have lasted as long as it took to bring about the final downfall of the capitalist system. Actually, it was quietly abandoned about the middle of 1934 and officially succeeded by the Popular Front in 1935.

The third period, then, coincided with the rise to power of both

[6] Compared to the small libraries written on Lenin and Trotsky, work on Bukharin has only begun. Two books on Bukharin have thus far appeared: Peter Knirsch, *Die ökenomischen Anschauungen Nikolaj I. Bucharins* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1959), and A. G. Löwy, *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1969). Löwy's book is the closest thing at present to a political biography, but it is far more a popular than a scholarly treatment. There have been two doctoral dissertations: John E. Flaherty, *The Political Career of Nicholas Bukharin* (New York University, 1954), and Sidney Heitman, *Nikolai I. Bukharin's Theory of World Revolution* (Columbia University, 1963). Heitman and Knirsch have published bibliographies of Bukharin's works. Heitman also has a chapter entitled 'Between Lenin and Stalin: Nikolai Bukharin' in *Revisionism*, edited by Leopold Labedz (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1962). Stephen F. Cohen of Princeton University is nearing completion of a full-scale study, *Bukharin and Russian Bolshevism, 1888–1938*. Cohen has published two articles: 'Bukharin, Lenin and the Theoretical Foundations of Bolshevism' (*Soviet Studies*, April 1970) and 'Marxist Theory and Bolshevik Policy: The Case of Bukharin's Historical Materialism' (*Political Science Quarterly*, March 1970). The only work on Zinoviev known to me is a doctoral dissertation by William Korey, *Zinoviev on the Problem of World Revolution, 1919–1927* (Columbia University, 1960).

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Stalin and Hitler. Few events in this century were more fateful. Until the beginning of the third period, Stalin was not the supreme authority in the communist world and in order to understand how he gained his final ascendancy, it is necessary to understand how the third period came about. The myths about the origins of the third period are also myths about Stalin's emergence as sole master of world communism.

The three periods corresponded with different phases of communist leadership. The first was toweringly dominated by Lenin, while the second was largely occupied by a ferocious factional struggle which ended in the defeat of Trotsky and Zinoviev. The great protagonists at the outset of the third were the victors, Stalin and Bukharin, whose falling-out in 1928–29 has traditionally been placed in the context of the third period.

The three periods also implied different tactical lines, for in communist thinking, there were always tactical correlatives of a given objective situation and a proclaimed change in the objective situation signalled a change in the tactical line. The first period had signified an immediate or at least an early struggle for power in one European country after another, particularly in Germany. The second period had brought about a 'right turn', most strikingly represented by the communist-Kuomintang alliance in China (1923–27) and by the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee (1925–27). The third period was accompanied by a 'left turn', which was expressed by three key terms—'class against class', 'united front from below', and 'social-fascism'. How they originated and who was responsible for them are some of the questions that need new answers.

THE prevailing view is seemingly simple and clear. For almost half a century, Stalin has been made the mastermind of the third period. Since the third period represented an extreme left turn, the assumption has been that it must have been conceived by Stalin, the 'leftist', against Bukharin, the 'rightist'.

What is perhaps the first serious work on the communist movement appeared in 1932, written by a distinguished historian, Arthur Rosenberg, a leading German communist from 1920 to 1927. He attributed the tactics of the third period wholly to Stalin's 'left course' in Russian domestic policy, which he dated from the 15th congress of the Russian Communist Party in December 1927. This view was consistent with Rosenberg's rule, laid down in reference to the Comintern's Sixth World Congress in 1928 which had officially promulgated the concept of the third period: 'A new attitude towards the international situation is always the consequence of a change in Russian domestic policy.'[7] Rosenberg evidently considered Stalin entirely responsible for both the

[7] Arthur Rosenberg, *A History of Bolshevism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), pp. 229, 232. The German original, *Geschichte des Bolschevismus*, appeared in 1932.

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international and internal changes of line at the end of the 1920s. In any case, he mentioned no one else.

Trotsky, also in 1932, attributed the third period to Stalin's entourage. 'Manuilsky', he maintained, 'buzzed in Molotov's ear the great idea of the "third period".'[8] Manuilsky was then Stalin's bureaucratic chieftain in the Comintern, and Molotov had temporarily replaced Bukharin in 1929, charged with overall political responsibility for the Comintern. The notion that Manuilsky had originated the idea of the third period was not one of Trotsky's happier inspirations.

A somewhat different approach was taken by Franz Borkenau, also a former German communist. In his first book on the communist movement, published in 1938, he largely interpreted the third period as a function of the Stalin-Bukharin split. Stalin, he asserted, moved to the left in order to defeat the Bukharinite 'right wing'. The left policy was first tried out in France where Borkenau assured his readers: 'There was little resistance within the French Communist Party against the new policy.' He added: 'The French communists simply obeyed.'[9]

In a later work, much inferior to the first one, Borkenau went even further in his attribution of the third period solely to Stalin. 'In that same summer of 1928,' he wrote, 'a new policy was introduced through the refusal of the French communists, *acting upon Stalin's personal orders*, to support the socialists at the second ballot in the general election' [author's italics]. In this work, Borkenau also maintained that the new policy had to be viewed in the context of the 'intra-party factional struggle in Russia, and in no other context whatsoever'—so much so that he accused the Stalinists of envisaging the end of relative capitalist stabilization 'more for the sake of spiting the Bukharinites' than for any other reason.[10]

More than anyone else, except possibly Stalin himself, Borkenau established the legend that Stalin alone had introduced the left turn associated with the third period and that it was the product of a straight right-left split between Bukharin and Stalin wholly determined by the factional struggle in Russia.

Another early effort by C. L. R. James, from a fervently Trotskyist point of view, was even more confusing. James scornfully dismissed Bukharin as 'Stalin's right-hand man' during 1924–28. Then he had Bukharin, 'already out of favour', announcing the new policy at the Sixth World Congress in July 1928. James hastened to add, however, that Stalin was satisfied to proclaim the details of the new policy 'through his mouthpieces'. Why Bukharin, as Stalin's 'right-hand man' and one of his presumed 'mouthpieces', should have landed in such trouble with Stalin by 1928 remained an impenetrable mystery. In any

[8] Leon Trotsky, 'What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat' (27 January 1932), reprinted in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), p. 157.
[9] *The Communist International*, pp. 333, 335.
[10] Franz Borkenau, *European Communism* (New York: Harper, 1953), pp. 65, 71.

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case, James prevented himself from looking behind the new policy by dating it from the Sixth World Congress, and he too managed to make Stalin seem to be wholly responsible for it.[11]

Isaac Deutscher dealt with the international left turn in his biography of Stalin, first published in 1949.[12] (In his later biography of Trotsky, he discussed it mainly in terms of Stalin's domestic policy and its effect on the Trotskyist opposition in exile.) Deutscher leaned over more to Borkenau's explanation than to Rosenberg's, though he adopted something of both. He first attributed the left turn to the communist setbacks in Britain and China but then emphasized Stalin's campaign against Bukharin in the Russian party. 'All the real issues at stake were Russian issues: the NEP, industrialization, collectivization, etc.', he wrote. 'But the powerful "switch over to the left" in the Russian party transmitted itself automatically to the Comintern hitherto guided by Bukharin.' Deutscher's time-table for the 'switch' began with Stalin's allegedly surprising statement at the 15th congress of the Russian party in December 1927 that capitalist stabilization had come to an end, and it concluded with the acceptance of 'his new thesis' at the Sixth Congress of the Comintern in the summer of 1928. In short, Deutscher continued the tradition of attributing the Comintern's third period wholly to Stalin, who had apparently completely forced it on Bukharin and the Comintern.

In his widely read survey of 1953, *The Pattern of Communist Revolution*, Professor Hugh Seton-Watson had relatively little to say about the third period. He devoted no more than a paragraph to it, so carelessly drawn up that he had the Sixth World Congress meeting in June instead of July 1928, and had it launching the slogan 'class against class'. The same slips appeared in the revised edition of 1960.[13]

In 1955, the late American communist leader, William Z. Foster, put out a perfectly preserved specimen of the unadulterated Stalinist line, no longer fashionable even in the most orthodox communist circles. Curiously, Foster also made the mistake of attributing the 'class against class' slogan to the Sixth World Congress in 1928. After noting that Bukharin had made the main report to the congress, Foster quickly reassured the faithful that 'the brilliant Marxist analysis of the Sixth Congress was basically the work of Stalin'.[14] C. L. R. James' villain was Foster's hero, but they agreed on one thing—the new line was Stalin's brainchild.

A far more influential book came out in 1960—*The Conscience of*

[11] C. L. R. James, *World Revolution 1917–1936* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1937), pp. 291, 306–07.

[12] Isaac Deutscher, *Stalin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), reprinted by Vintage Books, 1960, pp. 402–04.

[13] Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Pattern of Communist Revolution* (London: Methuen, 1953), p. 107. This book was issued in the United States as *From Lenin to Malenkov* (Praeger, 1953) and reissued in 1960 as *From Lenin to Khrushchev*.

[14] William Z. Foster, *History of the Three Internationals* (New York: International Publishers, 1955, reissued by Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 358.

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the Revolution by Professor Robert V. Daniels. It should have done somewhat better inasmuch as Bukharin was one of its chief characters. Professor Daniels also saw the inception of the third period as a straight right-left factional split. He put it this way: 'By the beginning of 1928, the Soviet leaders [under Stalin] had begun to turn against the Comintern Rightists now that their usefulness in combating the Trotskyists was coming to an end. This was the origin of the so-called "left turn" which took place during 1928 and which set the Comintern's aggressive tactical line for the next six years.' Professor Daniels even had Stalin developing the very idea of the third period.[15]

Günther Nollau's *International Communism and World Revolution*, published in German in 1959 and in English in 1961, devoted about 150 pages to the Communist International. A generally superficial survey, with few scholarly pretensions, it has made a place for itself mainly for lack of anything much better in so little space. Nollau followed Borkenau by attributing the left turn of the third period to the defeats suffered by the so-called right-wing policy of 1925–27. Stalin, according to Nollau, decided to apply Trotsky's left-wing policies against 'the "right-wing" group of Bukharin and his followers'. Stalin, then, had plagiarized from Trotsky, not from Bukharin, who had merely been the victim of the new line.[16]

The book in English which should have dealt with this period in some detail and depth is Kermit E. McKenzie's *Comintern and World Revolution 1928–1943*, published in 1964. He, too, began the story of the third period in December 1927 with the Russian party's 15th congress, a starting-point which made it impossible for him to get at the true origins. Professor McKenzie confidently asserted that 'there can be no doubt that the idea of a new third period originated in the Politburo of the CPSU and not elsewhere' and that the concept was, therefore, 'intimately linked to the broader story of Stalin's struggle for mastery, both within the CPSU and within the Comintern'. These rash and loose generalizations hopelessly confused the origins of the concept with Stalin's later version of it. Since Stalin controlled the Politburo, the reference to it pointed to him or to his entourage for the origin of the idea. The third period was, indeed, linked to Stalin's 'struggle for mastery' but not in the way Professor McKenzie imagined.[17]

The slogan 'class against class', the appearance of which was the first symptom of the left turn, has given some of the worst trouble. It was applied for the first time in France but has defied even a book devoted specifically to the French Communist Party. The Stalin-fixation has been so pertinacious that Professor Daniel R. Brower twice ascribed

[15] Robert Vincent Daniels, *The Conscience of the Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 334.

[16] Günther Nollau, *International Communism and World Revolution* (New York: Praeger, 1961), p. 105.

[17] Kermit E. McKenzie, *Comintern and World Revolution 1928–1943* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 122–23.

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the new tactics to Stalin—stating that 'the introduction of the tactics of "class against class" was connected with Stalin's rise to power', and that the 'major responsibility' for those tactics had fallen on Stalin. Inexplicably, the author himself cast doubt on Stalin's responsibility in footnotes, one stating that a high Comintern official, Jules Humbert-Droz, had sent him a letter to the effect that the 'class against class' slogan had been 'thought up' by none other than Humbert-Droz, and another referring to Humbert-Droz's first little book, '*L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*, which should have left little doubt that the introduction of the new tactics was *not* connected with Stalin's rise to power, nor indeed with Stalin at all—at least not in the way Professor Brower intended. The footnotes evidently had little effect on the text.[18]

BY this time, one begins to wonder what kind of power Stalin has exercised over so many different kinds of writers for so many years. The explanation is easiest for communists or ex-communists with strong political persuasions. Whether they sought to praise Stalin or to put him down, they had to give him more than his due. Others have implicated Trotsky by making him the true progenitor of the left turn, though when it came, Trotsky denounced it as 'adventurism'.[19] Almost no one has thought that Bukharin might have had anything to do with it, except to act as its intended victim.

It is more difficult to account for the views of more recent academic historians. They seem to have been satisfied to hurry over the ground or to take on faith what their elders had taught them, for what is most notable about the work in this field, old and new, is the lack of evidence and documentation on which it has rested. As far as the third period was concerned, neither Rosenberg nor Borkenau gave a shred of evidence for their highly dubious dicta. Neither did James. Neither did Deutscher on the points at issue. Foster, of course, was not inhibited by documentation. Seton-Watson cited one of the Sixth World Congress's lengthy resolutions in support of his statement that 'the Congress launched the slogan "class against class"'—but that slogan never appeared in this resolution.[20] Daniels offered no evidence for his attribution of the idea of the third period to Stalin, who had allegedly originated it in order to beat down the 'Comintern Rightists' as soon as they had exhausted their usefulness against the Trotskyists.[21] Nollau was equally

[18] Daniel R. Brower, *The New Jacobins* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), pp. 4, 10 and 14, notes 16 and 17.

[19] Leon Trotsky, *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1971), p. 56. This judgment appeared in an article, 'The Turn in the Communist International and the Situation in Germany', dated 26 September 1930.

[20] Seton-Watson, op. cit. p. 107. Two sentences later, dealing with the meaning of the slogan, Seton-Watson has a footnote: '*Protokollen des 6. Weltkongresses der K. I.*, Hamburg, 1929, Vol. IV, pp. 13–44.' The title is not quite accurately rendered; and since the resolution 'Die internationale Lage und die Aufgaben der Kommunistischen Internationale' is cited *en bloc*, there is no telling where the slogan is supposed to be found in it. If the footnote does not also apply to the launching of the slogan, the latter lacks a documentary source altogether.

[21] Daniels, op. cit. p. 334.

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cavalier about grounds for the notion that Stalin had filched the 'left-wing' policies from Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev for use against Bukharin's 'right-wing' group.[22] McKenzie noted that 'in 1929, after Stalin had publicly accused Bukharin of being a "right deviationist", a campaign was begun by Comintern spokesmen to establish Stalin as the originator of the basic ideas in the concept of the third period'. Without further comment, McKenzie hastily concluded, totally without evidence, that the idea of a new, third period must have originated in the Politburo of the CPSU, and since it was supposedly aimed at Bukharin, could only have originated with the Stalinists in the Politburo.[23] Brower advised his readers that the best accounts of the Comintern's leftward shift in policy were still to be found in Borkenau's 1938 book and in McKenzie's 1964 book, which may help to explain why he made Stalin chiefly responsible for 'class against class'.[24]

The questions raised in the past 40 years can now, I believe, be answered: Was Stalin responsible for the conception of the third period? Was 'class against class' launched at the Sixth World Congress in 1928? Were the French communists passively obedient in the face of the new policy? Did they act upon Stalin's personal orders? Was the 'switch over to the left' transmitted from the Russian party to the Comintern as a result of Russian issues? Was Stalin, Trotsky, or Bukharin mainly responsible for the Comintern's left turn? Was Bukharin as much of a 'rightist' as he has been portrayed?

In the end, the evidence must decide. Some of these myths might have been avoided, as I hope to show, by a closer study of the old sources; some could be definitively exploded only by the new sources. What they jointly demonstrate is that the story was far more complex than anyone had previously suspected.

AN example of how a closer study of the old sources might have averted some preventable errors is provided by the origins of the very term, the 'third period'.

Who was the first to use it, Stalin or Bukharin? The answer is: Bukharin. Some background is necessary to understand how and why this came about.

In 1926, Stalin and Bukharin were allied against the short-lived 'united opposition' of Zinoviev and Trotsky. The latter attacked from the left; one of their main targets was the official line on capitalist stabilization. Trotsky began to chip away at this foundation of the 'right turn' as early as 1925. As Zinoviev drifted away from Stalin and closer to Trotsky, he too began to chafe at it.[25] In February 1926, at the

[22] Nollau, op. cit. p. 105.
[23] McKenzie, op. cit. p. 122.
[24] Brower, op. cit. p. 4. Brower even has the united front appearing for the first time in early 1928 instead of in late 1921 (p. 3).
[25] Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country* (London: Macmillan, 1964), Vol. III, Part I, p. 292 (Trotsky), pp. 490–91 (Zinoviev).

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Comintern's Sixth Plenum, the last headed by him, Zinoviev recalled that in 1925 only two to three years of relative stabilization had been expected in Germany, and he rejoiced that the German situation was already much worse than anyone had dared to hope for the year before. He saw 1926 as 'already a period of wavering stabilization', as 'still less stable' than before. Zinoviev assured the delegates: 'Our prognosis remains the same: the downfall of capitalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat in a relatively short time!' To which Bukharin added: 'We all agree with the estimate of the situation [by Zinoviev].'[26]

These issues were not debated in a political vacuum. Stabilization was not a popular doctrine in the Comintern, because it seemed to postpone the revolution outside Russia indefinitely, to doom the communist parties to little more than marking time. Thus, when Bukharin replaced Zinoviev at the head of the Comintern at the Seventh Plenum in November–December 1926, he was under considerable pressure to meet the Trotsky-Zinoviev attack from the left and to mollify the impatient foreign parties. Stalin did not have this immediate problem in the Russian party.

It was at the Seventh Plenum that Bukharin expressed for the first time the belief in 'a new third period'. He characterized it as one in which 'the internal contradictions of the process of the stabilization of capitalism are coming out in ever sharper form'. Class tensions, he said, were growing more acute, creating a more favourable situation for the communist parties. If they did their duty, he declared, 'an immediate revolutionary situation' would soon appear in Central Europe.[27]

What Bukharin meant by a new, third period, and what it came to mean for Stalin, were two different things. But the very term was first used by Bukharin, long before Stalin first committed himself to the idea. And for at least a year, they agreed on what it meant.

It must be remembered that at this time, in 1926, Bukharin was far from being Stalin's 'ready tool', as E. H. Carr has called him.[28] When Bukharin took over the Comintern, he was regarded as the acknowledged, undisputed international communist spokesman. His prestige far exceeded Stalin's, and in fact he bore the brunt of the war of words against Trotsky and Zinoviev. A student of Bukharin's career was not exaggerating Bukharin's short-lived pre-eminence: 'By virtue of his high posts, varied and widespread activities, and authority as a theoretician, Bukharin exercised greater influence in the Communist world during the

[26] *Protokoll der Erweiterten Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale*, 17 Febr. bis 15 März 1926 (Verlag Carl Hoym, 1926), pp. 15, 22, 37 (Zinoviev), p. 228 (Bukharin).

[27] *Protokoll der Erweiterten Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale*, 22. November–16. Dezember 1926 (Verlag Carl Hoym, 1927), pp. 36–38.

[28] Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism In One Country 1924–1926* (London: Macmillan, 1958), Vol. I, p. 171. For some reason, Carr has consistently denigrated Bukharin's role; the chapter on 'The Right Deviation' in his latest volume, *Foundations of a Planned Economy 1926–1929*, Vol. II, is virtually a factional treatment; the very title implies that Stalinism was the norm and that anything else was a 'deviation', not merely an 'opposition'.

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middle and late 1920s than any other individual until that time except Lenin, and after Lenin's death in 1924 many Soviet and foreign observers came to regard him as the legitimate heir and successor to Lenin's political and ideological leadership of the international Communist movement.'[29] In 1925, when Bukharin allowed himself, according to Mr. Carr, to become 'Stalin's mouthpiece' against the Zinovievite and later the united opposition of Zinoviev and Trotsky,[30] the latter aimed their main fire at Bukharin, not at Stalin. They at least thought that Bukharin was more than a 'mouthpiece' and, indeed, they considered him to be their most formidable adversary—a strange misjudgment on their part. At the Russian 15th party congress in December 1925, Stalin saw fit to say: 'We are, and shall be, for Bukharin', and Professor Alexander Erlich is undoubtedly reflecting the contemporary view by remarking that in this and other statements Stalin 'was talking like a Bukharinite pure and simple'.[31] One of Trotsky's fatal mistakes in this period was to overestimate the nefarious influence of Bukharin and to regard him as more dangerous than Stalin. Like the others, Trotsky was so infatuated with labels that he could conceive, in certain circumstances, of forming a united front with Stalin, the 'centrist', against Bukharin, the 'rightist', but not vice versa.[32] After Lenin's death, Bukharin was a power in his own right, both willing and able to think for himself. For the time being, Stalin needed him and was willing to share authority with him. As for Bukharin's line in the Comintern, Stalin defended it against the opposition's charge that Bukharin was supporting 'right deviations'.[33]

By mid-1926, as we have seen, the Trotsky-Zinoviev opposition was clamouring that stabilization had come to an end and, therefore, a left turn in the Comintern was due. This pressure presented Bukharin with a tricky problem. He refused to agree that the era of capitalist stabiliza-

[29] Sidney Heitman, 'Between Lenin and Stalin: Nikolai Bukharin', in *Revisionism*, edited by Leopold Labedz (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 79. From the end of 1926 to the issue of 1 April 1928, the Comintern's theoretical organ, *The Communist International*, featured an advertisement of Bukharin's booklet, *Building Up Socialism*, in these terms: 'Nikolai Bukharin is now acknowledged as the most outstanding theorist of the Communist International.' Then the booklet was relegated to a brief listing with other works, and in the issue of 15 May 1928, the magazine began to feature Stalin's new book, *Leninism*, as 'A complete, up-to-date, and authoritative book on Communist Theory and Practice.' Two months later, just before the Sixth World Congress, all mention of Bukharin's work disappeared. These changes were hardly fortuitous.

[30] *Socialism In One Country, 1924–1926*, Vol. I, p. 173.

[31] Alexander Erlich, *The Soviet Industrialization Debate, 1924–1928* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 90–91. Professor Erlich notes that the words 'and we shall be' were later stricken from Stalin's collected works. The passage may be found in the English edition in Vol. VII, p. 375, where it is translated somewhat differently as 'we back Bukharin'. A. G. Löwy has pointed out another such change. At the Comintern's Seventh Plenum in December 1926, Stalin referred to 'Bukharin and Stalin' and 'Bukharin or Stalin'. In Stalin's *Works*, the words were changed to 'Stalin and Bukharin' and 'Stalin or Bukharin' (English ed., Vol IX, pp. 31, 33). Stalin would not have bothered to change the order of the names if it had not had some significance.

[32] Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed*, pp. 314–15.

[33] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. X, p. 5 (1 August 1927).

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tion had exhausted itself, but at the same time, he was unwilling to be put in the position of backing a right-wing line against a left-wing one. Bukharin's handling of the problem was not a simple one, and it is the oversimplification of his policy that has led so much of the existing literature astray.

At the end of 1926, Bukharin's problem was how to rationalize an incipient left turn without giving up the basic idea of partial capitalist stabilization. He attempted to resolve it in two ways.

First, he argued that the very process of stabilization was increasing the exploitation of the working class. From this he drew the apparent paradox that 'precisely the process of stabilization is forming the basis of acuter class antagonisms, of the revolutionizing of the working class'. Where capitalist stabilization was most successful, as in Germany, class antagonisms were allegedly most acute.[34] When he introduced the idea of the third period at the Seventh Plenum in November 1926, therefore, he based it on the increasing 'internal contradictions' of the process of stabilization rather than on the termination of that process.

Secondly, Bukharin contended that the time had passed for a general or abstract view of stabilization. He saw the economic curve still rising in the United States, Germany, and France, while capitalism was decaying most rapidly in Great Britain. He came out for what he called a 'differentiated' approach to the question. Despite the persistence of stabilization in some of the main capitalist countries, he professed to see a 'swing to the left' on the part of the 'broad masses' of West European workers in most countries, though he admitted it was taking forms peculiar to each country. As a result, he was able to put forward the perspective of 'a sharpening of class struggles' in a series of countries—France, Germany, Britain, Italy, Czechoslovakia.[35]

In this way, Bukharin was able to have his cake (capitalist stabilization) and eat it too (sharper class struggles). It was a precarious balancing act, for it changed the party line without basically changing the objective situation.

At first, Stalin followed Bukharin's lead. In August 1927, his thinking was still totally Bukharinist. 'Zinoviev thinks that once there is stabilization, the cause of revolution is lost', Stalin argued. 'He does not understand that the crisis of capitalism and the preparation for its doom grow as a result of stabilization.'[36] In a well-known interview with a foreign workers' delegation on 5 November 1927, he was asked: 'How do you estimate the situation in Western Europe? Are revolutionary events to be expected within the next few years?' Stalin replied that 'capitalism may become partly stabilized, it may rationalize its produc-

[34] Bukharin, 'Questions of International Politics', report to 15th Party Conference of CPSU, 26 October 1926, *International Press Correspondence*, 4 November 1926, p. 1254.

[35] *International Press Correspondence*, op. cit. pp. 1246–47; *Protokoll* (VII Plenum), op. cit. pp. 60, 108, 115.

[36] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. X, p. 51.

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tion, it may temporarily hold down the working class', but the elements of a profound crisis were still growing within it. Finally, he asserted: 'We are on the threshold of new revolutionary events.'[37] In this pronouncement, Stalin seemed to forecast 'new revolutionary events' despite partial stabilization, not because it had come to an end.

Only a month later, however, Stalin struck a different note. At the 15th Russian party congress on 3 December 1927 he spoke of 'collapsing stabilization' and a 'new revolutionary upsurge'.[38] This went much further than Bukharin had gone or was willing to go. Bukharin spoke at the same congress, more in his old vein. He continued to hold that 'partial stabilization' was producing increased contradictions within capitalism, but he stopped short of claiming that stabilization was collapsing. He professed to detect a 'swing to the left and a revolutionization of the proletariat in the main centres of European countries', 'the beginning of a new period, in which the working class is turning to the left', but he cautioned that it was 'not on the eve of an immediate revolutionary situation in Europe'.[39]

Thus, Stalin and Bukharin reached the parting of the ways on the question of capitalist stabilization at the end of 1927. Increasingly it became one of Stalin's most telling debating points against Bukharin. The issue first emerged privately in the Russian delegation to the Sixth World Congress in the summer of 1928. The dispute afforded Stalin an opportunity to give one of his classic exhibitions of how to destroy an opponent politically.

Bukharin was particularly interested in the new programme adopted by the Congress. The draft programme, drawn up under his supervision and probably written mainly by him, referred to the partial stabilization of capitalism as 'becoming corroded from different causes'.[40] That was apparently as far as Bukharin was willing to go.

In his main report to the Congress, Bukharin went back to some of his old themes. He stressed the 'technical revolution' in some capitalist countries, especially the United States. German capitalism was still 'developing rather rapidly', France was 'becoming transformed into a substantial industrial country', even declining Britain was increasing its forces of production 'on certain sectors'. Nevertheless, he concluded that capitalist stabilization was 'decaying', that the development of capitalism along new lines inevitably intensified its contradictions, leading to 'the great collapse, the final catastrophe'.[41]

Stalin later revealed that the Russian delegation to the Congress had forced Bukharin to make about 20 changes in the latter's 'theses' on the international situation. The issue of capitalist stabilization came first in Stalin's mind. 'According to Bukharin's theses,' Stalin charged, 'it

[37] Ibid. pp. 221–22.
[38] Ibid. pp. 293, 297.
[39] Bukharin, *Report of the 15th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1928), pp. 220–22.
[40] *International Press Correspondence*, 6 June 1928, p. 554.
[41] Ibid. 30 July 1928, pp. 725–26.

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appeared that nothing new is taking place at the present time to shake capitalist stabilization, but that, on the contrary, capitalism is *reconstructing itself* and that, on the whole, it is maintaining itself more or less *securely*.' This was undoubtedly a caricature of Bukharin's position. He had for over a year been maintaining that the growing 'internal contradictions' of capitalist stabilization were producing increasing radicalization of the working class, making capitalism less secure. Stalin put the issue as he wanted to see it: 'Is capitalist stabilization being shaken or is it becoming more secure?'[42]

There is no evidence that Bukharin believed, as Stalin wanted to make him appear to believe, that capitalist stabilization was 'becoming more secure'. But there is evidence that Bukharin did not believe, as of mid-1928, over a year before the Wall Street crash, that capitalist stabilization was 'being shaken' as much as Stalin wanted to make everyone believe. If Stalin had not decided by that time to destroy Bukharin politically, the difference would hardly have merited such a hullabaloo. The resolution passed by the Congress, which the Russian delegation must have approved, largely followed Bukharin's line that the capitalist system in the third period was going through a rapid technical development, that its 'contradictions' were also intensifying, and that these factors were inevitably leading 'to capitalist stabilization becoming still more precarious and to the severe intensification of the general crisis of capitalism'.[43] Stabilization could become more 'precarious' only if there was still something left of it. The programme as finally adopted used the same words as Bukharin's original draft—that the partial stabilization of capitalism 'is being corroded from various causes'.[44] There was little direct evidence at the Sixth World Congress that Bukharin had backed down.

An air of unreality hung over this entire controversy. The signs of capitalist collapse at the end of 1927 were so hard to detect that the Comintern's own chief economist, Eugen Varga, considered 1927 'the best year since the end of the war' from the capitalist standpoint.[45] Throughout 1928, despite increased unemployment, he continued to see 'an improvement in the business position of the big capitalist countries', with uncertainty only in Germany.[46] As a result of his failure to anticipate what Stalin wanted, Varga came under attack in 1929 for 'right-opportunist tendencies' and was removed from further work in the Comintern.[47]

[42] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XII, pp. 22–23 (italics in original). There is some reason to doubt whether Stalin's version is altogether trustworthy. Bukharin referred to the same incident much less melodramatically: he said that the Russian delegation had amended his thesis to make it 'more precise', as the available evidence seems to indicate (*International Press Correspondence*, 13 August 1928, p. 864).

[43] *International Press Correspondence*, 23 November 1928, p. 1568.

[44] Ibid. 31 December 1928, p. 1755.

[45] Ibid. 14 March 1928, p. 285.

[46] Ibid. 28 May 1929, p. 544.

[47] *Protokoll* (Xth Plenum), p. 409 (Molotov). His exclusion from the Comintern is discussed by Laszlo Tikos, *E. Vargas Tätigkeit als Wirtschaftsanalytiker und Publizist* (Tübingen: Böhlau Verlag, 1965), pp. 51–52.

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Though Bukharin and Varga were punished for not seeing capitalist stabilization collapse in time, their successors seemed to take an inordinately long time to make up their minds about it. For about four years more, it seemed to be a case of going, going, but not yet gone. In mid-1929, Molotov spoke of 'the increasing shattering of capitalist stabilization', and Kuusinen thought it was 'becoming more and more undermined'.[48] In 1930, after the Wall Street crash and the unmistakable signs of a world economic crisis, Stalin and the Comintern still hesitated to go all the way and decided that 'capitalist stabilization is coming to an end'.[49] Only in September 1932 was it finally made official that 'capitalist stabilization has ended'.[50] One wonders what Bukharin would have been charged with if he had taken so long.

Trotsky's views on stabilization were *sui generis*. He also saw three post-war periods, but different ones. The first supposedly extended from 1917 to 1921, the second from March 1921 to October 1923, and the third from October 1923 to the British general strike of 1926 or, as he uncertainly added, 'even up to' 1928. For Trotsky, stabilization had clearly set in by the beginning of 1924, and he berated Zinoviev for having officially recognized it in mid-1925, a year and a half too late. By that time, Trotsky professed to see signs that stabilization was being undermined. He criticized the Comintern's policies as too leftist in 1924–25 and too rightist in 1926–27. The trouble was that Trotsky and Bukharin used the same term in different senses. Bukharin's periodization was based primarily on the 'objective situation', on the social and economic conditions of capitalism. Trotsky's periods were rather political in nature, depending largely on the tactics and prospects of the communist parties themselves. Trotsky claimed to be the first as early as 1926 to detect a 'shift to the left' in the European working class, but in mid-1928, he cautioned that this alleged radicalization was still only in its 'first phase' and not yet clearly defined. As soon as Stalin discovered the same shift and for good measure made it into an incipient 'revolutionary upsurge', Trotsky accused him of being too late. At the end of 1929, Trotsky went to some pains to pooh-pooh the revolutionary potential of the third period, especially in France, where it was supposed to be most evident, by pointedly finding that French strikes in 1927–29 had dropped to their lowest level in a decade. The theory that the Comintern's left turn in 1928 'issued *directly*' from conditions in the Soviet Union, not in the capitalist world, stemmed from Trotsky. He

[48] *Protokoll* (Xth Plenum), 3–19 July 1929, p. 412 (Molotov), p. 44 (Kuusinen).

[49] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XII, p. 261 (27 June 1930); *XIth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International: Theses, Resolutions and Decisions*, April 1930 (London: Modern Books, 1931), p. 31.

[50] *Capitalist Stabilization Has Ended: Thesis and Resolutions of the Twelfth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1932).

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somehow managed to disagree with Stalin and Bukharin no matter what positions they held.[51]

The upshot seems to be that the whole controversy over 'stabilization' and the 'third period' was so faction-ridden that all the leading communists saw in the 'objective' situation what they wanted to see politically. Stalin's intellectual contribution was minimal; his name has been attached to the third period primarily because he had the power to impose it in its crudest form. He was so little prepared for the depths of the world economic crisis that it took him three years after the Wall Street crash to make up his mind to proclaim the actual end of 'stabilization'.

THUS far we have reexamined the conception of the third period mainly by going back to the old sources, available for over 40 years. How the 'left turn' actually came about, however, has been fully revealed only in the past decade by the newly available sources.

The new line was first foreshadowed by the appearance of the slogan 'class against class', and now we know how this came about.

In 1964, a little book of 265 pages appeared in Paris. Its author was Jules Humbert-Droz; its title was '*L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*. In this book, Humbert-Droz told a curious story.

But first, who was Jules Humbert-Droz? He was a former Swiss Protestant pastor, born of a working-class family of socialist watchmakers, who had spent 1914–15 in London at the French Church in Bayswater; he had given up the ministry the following year to edit a socialist paper in his native town of La Chaux-de-Fonds in the canton of Neuchâtel. Lean, bespectacled, intensely dedicated, the war years had changed him from a Tolstoyan pacifist to a revolutionary socialist and by 1920 the main founder of the Swiss Communist Party. Lenin thought he could do more good in Moscow and, in 1921, took the initiative to make Humbert-Droz one of three secretaries of the Comintern in charge of the Latin Secretariat, responsible for Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Latin America. For almost a decade, he was a key figure of world communism, first as one of Zinoviev's right-hand men, then as an even more intimate confidant of Bukharin. The apogee of Humbert-Droz's career came at the Sixth World Congress in 1928; he was made Secretary-General of the Congress, member of its Presidium, secretary to its important Programme Commission, and one of three elected to the ECCI (Executive Committee) in recognition of his personal services

[51] Trotsky's clearest contemporary exposition of his views on 'stabilization' and the third period may be found in 'The Draft Program of the Communist International' and 'What Now?', written in mid–1928 and brought together in *The Third International After Lenin* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1936), esp. pp. 82–87, 104, 165–66, 246–47, 259–60, 265. For his remarks on France at the end of 1929, see Léon Trotsky, *Le Mouvement Communiste en France (1929–1939)* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1967), pp. 291–314. His analysis of the third period, mainly in terms of Germany as of September 1930, may be found in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*, op. cit. pp. 55–74.

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rather than as the representative of a party. Yet even a functionary of such high rank could be finished off in a few weeks by defying Stalin. Humbert-Droz protested against the handling of a scandal in the German party indirectly involving the communist leader, Ernst Thaelmann, whom Stalin was determined to protect. By the end of 1928, less than three months after the Sixth World Congress, Humbert-Droz was officially condemned at a session of the Presidium in which Stalin screamed 'Go to the devil!' at him. Significantly, Humbert-Droz admitted that Stalin had been 'completely unknown' to him as late as 1925. Humbert-Droz was caught up in the purge of 'Bukharinites' and 'rightists' in 1929, but unlike some of the others, was not expelled. Instead, he went off on a mission to Latin America, capitulated in 1930, and returned the following year to Switzerland, where he continued to serve more or less faithfully until he was expelled in 1943.

When Humbert-Droz's first book came out in 1964, he was 73 years old. Two more volumes of his memoirs came out before his death in 1971. We apparently owe much of his invaluable, indispensable archive to his mother and wife. To his mother in Switzerland he used to send copies of his reports and letters in order to be able to refer to them quickly if necessary. He also wrote dutifully to his wife whenever he went out on missions for the Comintern; these letters have also survived. His archives have been available to students for some time; they are being published in Holland, the first volume having already appeared.[52]

One of the Latin Secretariat's most troublesome parties in the 1920s was the French. The Comintern sent a succession of emissaries and representatives to France in a vain effort to get the kind of policies and leaders that could invigorate the French party. Among these envoys were Humbert-Droz himself, who was called 'L'Oeil de Moscou' in a French police report; August Guralsky, a German-born favourite of Zinoviev who used the name 'Lepetit' in Paris in 1925; and Boris Mikhailov, one of Stalin's most trusted Russian agents abroad, who operated in France in 1925, in Britain in 1926, and in the United States in 1929–30, known everywhere as 'Williams'.[53]

[52] Humbert-Droz has told the story of his life from 1891 to 1921 in Vol. I of his *Mémoires de Jules Humbert-Droz*, entitled *Mon Evolution du Tolstoïsme au Communisme* (Neuchâtel: Baconnière, 1969), and from 1921 to 1931 in Vol. II, entitled *De Lénine à Staline* (same publisher, 1971). The first volume of his archives has been published as *Archives de Jules Humbert-Droz—Origines et Débuts des Partis communistes des Pays latins—1919–1923* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1970). There are microfilms of the entire archives at the International Institute of Social History at Amsterdam, the Russian Research Center at Harvard University, and the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford, California.

[53] Guralsky and Mikhailov are vividly described in the unpublished memoirs of Henri Barbé, *Souvenirs de Militant et de Dirigeant Communiste*, pp. 74–76. Barbé says that Mikhailov worked in Britain in 1926; the histories of the British Communist Party by Pelling, Macfarlane, and Klugmann do not mention him. The entire subject of Comintern emissaries and representatives in France and elsewhere is well covered by Branko Lazitch in *The Comintern—Historical Highlights* (London: Pall

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In 1926, the Comintern's representative in France was another man of many names. He had started out in life as Max Goldfarb. Probably of Polish-Jewish origin, he had originally belonged to the Jewish Bund. He came to the United States some time after the turn of the century and worked as labour editor of the Socialist Jewish *Daily Forward*. He returned to Russia after the Bolshevik revolution, was speedily converted from Menshevism to Bolshevism, and went to work in the Comintern, where he changed his name to 'D. Petrovsky'. In 1924, the Comintern sent him to Britain where he was known as 'A. J. Bennett'. He spent the next year in France, this time camouflaged as 'Humbold'. According to the former British communist leader, J. T. Murphy, Petrovsky came to a sad end in the purges of 1936–38. When he was brought up to defend himself, it seems, he failed to mention his lamentable Menshevik career in America as well as his reputed work for the *Novy Mir*, the Russian socialist newspaper in New York for which Trotsky and Bukharin had also written in 1917. Petrovsky was last heard of in 1938 in a Soviet prison; his wife, Rose Cohen, a British communist who had long worked in Moscow, also paid for his alleged sins with a lengthy period in a Soviet prison.[54]

When Petrovsky, as he was always known in the Comintern, returned to Moscow early in 1927, an acrimonious dispute on the French party's policy broke out between him and Humbert-Droz. That party had long been considered a prime source of the 'right danger'. Zinoviev had attacked it as such at the Sixth Plenum in February 1926, and on this score Bukharin had agreed with him. As the latter put it, 'the central danger in France is the right danger'.[55] In October of that year, after replacing Zinoviev, Bukharin made the same diagnosis of the British party, where, he said, 'our chief task is the correction of a whole number of right errors'.[56]

In both France and Britain, then, it was well-established Comintern policy that a 'left turn' was necessary. Bukharin, the 'rightist', was just as apt to carry it out as Zinoviev, the 'leftist'. The opportunity

Mall Press, 1966), pp. 45–65. After the second world war, Mikhailov turned up as 'press attaché' of the Soviet Embassy in Paris and, for once, his calling card read 'Boris Mikhailov'.

54 I dealt with Petrovsky's career in the US in *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (New York: Viking Press, 1960), esp. pp. 390–91. His downfall is related by J. T. Murphy, *New Horizons* (London: John Lane, 1941), pp. 242, 251. Rose Cohen's pathetic story has been told by Maurice B. Reckitt, *As It Happened* (London: Dent, 1941), pp. 147–50. Henry Pelling, *The British Communist Party* (London: A. & D. Black, 1958), p. 54, mistakenly says that he was 'permanent Comintern representative in Britain between 1924 and 1929'; Petrovsky held that post in 1924–25, but became head of the Anglo-American Secretariat in Moscow in 1928–29. The official British communist historian, James Klugmann, *History of the Communist Party of Great Britain* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1969), vol. II, p. 72, gingerly mentions 'Bennett, a representative of the Communist International (at times in Britain)', from which one might never guess that he once dominated the British party.

55 *Protokoll* (VI Plenum), op. cit. pp. 59–61 (Zinoviev), p. 231 (Bukharin).

56 *International Press Correspondence*, 4 November 1926, p. 1256 (at the 15th Party Conference of the CPSU).

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came with the forthcoming elections in both countries. Left to themselves, the French communists would have put up their own candidates in the first ballot and supported the candidates of the 'Bloc des Gauches' in the second ballot. This bloc contained at least one openly bourgeois party, the Radical-Socialists, and thus implied an alliance with the class enemy. The socialists, also in the bloc, were regarded as hardly any better, though some distinction was made between their leaders and workers. By associating themselves with the 'Left Bloc', however, the communists could help prevent the election of extreme right-wing 'National Union' candidates and save themselves from being isolated on the extreme left. In the senatorial elections in the Seine district in 1927, the communists even supported a common list containing one communist, three socialists, and three Radical-Socialists.[57]

As a result, there need be no surprise that the Comintern under Bukharin should have decided to do something about the 'right danger' in the French party. The initiative came from Humbert-Droz, not from Bukharin and least of all from Stalin. Humbert-Droz decided early in 1927 to change the French party line for the forthcoming elections, still a year off. In essence, he demanded a brutal break with the Bloc des Gauches. Just back from Paris, Petrovsky fought for the old policy. Humbert-Droz and Petrovsky—the latter backed by the French—clashed so furiously that a commission of six, including Stalin and Bukharin, was appointed to settle the issue. It was during the sessions of this commission, in March 1927, that Humbert-Droz invented the term 'class against class' to justify breaking with the Bloc des Gauches, viewed by him as representative of the bourgeoisie. 'Against Petrovsky,' Humbert-Droz wrote in his first version of the incident, 'I defended the tactic "class against class" . . .'[58] The commission upheld Humbert-Droz. Its decision took the form of an 'Open Letter' to the French party, dated 2 April 1927, instructing it 'to wage a resolute fight against opportunist attitudes with respect to parties of the "left"' and condemning electoral agreements or common lists with the Socialist Party. This letter used the expression 'vastes mouvements de classe' and 'cachet de classe' as the objectives towards which the French communists should strive in their electoral campaign. The key word was 'class', but the magic words, 'class against class', had not yet appeared in it. The French communists were so enraged by the advice in this letter that they tried unsuccessfully to get Humbert-Droz removed from the Latin Secretariat and replace him with Petrovsky. But, as Humbert-Droz wrote to Ercoli (Togliatti), then his ally at the Italian party's headquarters in Paris, 'the Russian comrades, particularly Bukharin, vigorously supported me', and he won out against both Petrovsky and the French.[59]

[57] Jedermann, *La 'Bolchevisation' du parti communiste français* (Paris: Maspero, 1971), p. 102.

[58] *'L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*, op. cit. pp. 241, 248.

[59] *'L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*, op. cit. pp. 241–50. For the 2 April 1927 'Open Letter', see Gérard Walter, *Histoire du Parti Communiste Français* (Paris: Somogy, 1948, p. 184), and Victor Joannès, *Cahiers de l'Institut Maurice Thorez*, 1970, vol. 20, No. 4, p. 52, note 2.

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In Britain, a similar question confronted the Comintern. In the previous general election of 1924, only eight communists had been put up as candidates, four of them by local Labour parties, and one had been elected. Another general election was approaching, and relations with the Labour Party seemed to pose the same problem as those with the 'Left Bloc' in France.

On 1 October 1927, the Comintern's Political Secretariat, its ruling body, sent a telegram to the British Communist Party demanding an electoral break with the Labour Party. This message called on the British party to 'struggle against the bourgeois leadership of the Labour Party, to strengthen and prepare itself against parliamentary cretinism in all forms, to go into the forthcoming elections as an independent party with its own platform and its own candidates, even in those cases when so-called official candidates of the Labour Party will be put up against candidates of the Communist Party'.[60] A similar telegram was sent to the French Communist Party. The latter, and no doubt the former as well, was signed by Bukharin.[61] The formula 'class against class' appeared for the first time publicly in an 'Open Letter', issued by the French Central Committee on 9–10 November 1927, informing party members of the new electoral tactics. On the surface, however, this document seemed to envisage a complete break with the Radicals but not with the socialists. The Open Letter offered the latter a new 'Worker and Peasant Bloc' with the communists on the second ballot; a 'minimum programme' of 20 points, however, was drawn up in such a way that the socialists could hardly be expected to accept it. According to Henri Barbé, then one of the French communists' top leaders, the 'minimum programme' was deliberately intended to be unacceptable to the socialists.[62] Since the traditional French left could not hope to win the election or even to hold most of its seats without the Radicals, the socialists ridiculed the proposal and never deigned to reply. By the time the elections came in April 1928, the French communists were fully prepared or resigned to go it alone.[63]

[60] *Die Kommunistische Internationale: Kurzer historischer Abriss* (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1970), p. 324. This is a translation of the official Soviet history of the Comintern put out for the 50th anniversary in 1969.

[61] Georges Cogniot, *L'Internationale Communiste* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1969), p. 100. Cogniot mentions only the French party, but the same procedure prevailed for the British party.

[62] Henri Barbé, *Souvenirs de Militant et de Dirigeant Communiste*, p. 133.

[63] The best contemporary documentary source for the Comintern's role and the internal French party struggle on this issue is *Classe contre classe: la question française au IXe exécutive de l'Internationale Communiste* (Paris, 1929). There is also a pertinent letter by Albert Vassart, dated 24 November 1928, in *Le Mouvement Social* (Paris), January–March 1970, pp. 28–29. The only accurate account known to me, as far as it goes, may be found in an article by William A. Hoisington, Jr., 'Class Against Class: The French Communist Party and the Comintern', *International Review of Social History* (Amsterdam), Vol. XV, 1970, pp. 19–42. Hoisington did not use the Tasca Archive, and Humbert-Droz's *De Lénine à Staline* came out too late for him. His treatment tends to focus narrowly, as his subtitle put it, on 'A Study of Election Tactics in 1928'.

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Not a single one of the 187 deputies elected on the first ballot was a communist. And thereby hangs a tale that no one who had read the entire literature on this subject for the past 40 years could possibly have been led to expect or even to find credible. Even more incredibly, we now have four different versions of the same story.

Two of them come from Humbert-Droz.

In the first version in '*L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*, Humbert-Droz told how 'a gust of panic blew through the Kremlin' when the returns of the first ballot came in. A long, violent debate ensued in Bukharin's office in the Kremlin. Stalin cried: 'The Soviet Union cannot admit that there should not be any French communists in the French Chamber.' He demanded an immediate reversal of the class-against-class tactic and wanted a telegram sent that same evening ordering the French communists to get in touch with the French socialists and offer to support socialist candidates in return for socialist support of communist candidates. Humbert-Droz opposed him vehemently on the ground that such a brusque change of tactics would hopelessly confuse the French party. Finally, Stalin reluctantly said to Humbert-Droz: 'You know French conditions better than I do—so, don't send the telegram.' To which Humbert-Droz added: 'It was the one and only time I saw Stalin back down.' [64]

Humbert-Droz's second version came in the second volume of his memoirs, published in 1971. In it Humbert-Droz retold the same story with additional details. He now referred to Humbold-Petrovsky as 'Stalin's envoy' and as Stalin's 'henchman', who had encouraged the French communists to make an electoral deal with the Bloc des Gauches. Stalin had 'defended' Petrovsky. As for the class-against-class tactics, Humbert-Droz noted that 'several commentators attribute this policy to Stalin' but 'I claim its exclusive paternity'. The debates on its application to France, Humbert-Droz added, had brought him closer to Bukharin, 'who not only supported my policy, but defended me with all the authority of the Russian Communist Party against the personal attacks of the leadership of the French Communist Party'.[65]

Another version came from Henri Barbé, whose unusually chequered political career had extended from top leadership in the French Communist Party to collaboration with the Germans in the second world war.

Barbé was a former mechanic who joined the French party in the early 1920s and rose rapidly from head of the French Communist Youth in 1926 to French representative in Moscow in 1928. At the height of his communist career, he was a member of the Comintern's Executive Committee, Presidium and Political Secretariat—as high as any French communist could hope to go. He gained the favour of

[64] '*L'Oeil de Moscou' à Paris*, op. cit. pp. 241–42. In this book, Humbert-Droz quoted Stalin as saying: 'Vous connaissez les conditions françaises mieux que moi—donc rien dans le télégramme' (p. 242). In his later *De Lénine à Staline*, Stalin's words were changed to: 'Vous connaissez la France mieux que moi. Pas de télégramme!' (p. 282). Humbert-Droz did not know Russian; Bukharin translated for him.

[65] *De Lénine à Staline*, pp. 277–84.

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Manuilsky, who helped to propel him into the top leadership of the French party in 1929–30. Barbé began to slip the following year; by 1934 he was expelled with Jacques Doriot, with whom he had been closely associated. Barbé parted company with Doriot in 1939 and went over during the German occupation of France to the collaborationist movement headed by Marcel Déat. His hatred of the communists was such, once he had turned against them, that he was willing to use almost any means to fight them.

In 1949–50, Barbé composed a 375-page typewritten manuscript on his career in the communist movement and particularly on his experiences in Moscow. In it he devoted a section to the 'class-against-class' tactic and its reception in France. He confirmed that the opposition to it had been so forceful, especially on the part of important provincial leaders, that all of Humbert-Droz's authority as the Comintern's delegate to a French party conference in January 1928, three months before the election, was needed to get the new line adopted. Faced with a long prison sentence, Barbé was sent off to Moscow after the conference to represent the French party in the Comintern. As soon as the returns of the first ballot of the French election came in, Barbé made an optimistic analysis of it, and the Latin Secretariat accepted his recommendation that the French communists should go ahead with their own candidates on the second ballot after making a final appeal to the socialists to accept the 'minimum programme'.

Neither of Humbert-Droz's accounts of the meeting with Stalin mentions Barbé. But Barbé was present at the same meeting, and his manuscript contains a lengthy account of what took place. First, Bukharin and Humbert-Droz told him to prepare a short report on the first ballot for a meeting with Stalin. The three of them went to the Kremlin where they waited for Stalin in a 'vast, gloomy' room with only a bare table and some chairs next to Stalin's office. Stalin came in, smiling slightly, smoking his pipe. He shook hands, sat down at the table, and asked them to get through quickly. Barbé gave his report in French for five minutes, Bukharin translated and added his own view in support of the new electoral tactic. After Bukharin, no one spoke for several minutes. Then Stalin put his pipe on the table and began to speak slowly, without raising his voice. He asked two questions: how many communist candidates had run behind the socialists, and how many socialists had run behind the communists. After Barbé gave him the information, Stalin spoke again: 'It is necessary to send a telegram to the leadership of the French Communist Party telling it to get in touch with the leadership of the Socialist Party. The communists will propose the policy of "give and take", that is, I will withdraw my candidates in favour of yours and you will retire your candidates in favour of mine.' [66]

[66] Stalin may have liked the expression 'give and take'. He used it again later the same year in reference to Soviet relations with capitalist countries (Stalin, *Works*, Vol. X, p. 296).

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According to Barbé, both he and Humbert-Droz were 'stupefied'. Barbé objected that such a drastic change of line would unleash 'a grave internal crisis in the party'. The French communists would not understand such an abrupt about-face. Stalin answered that the French party would be quite well able to understand such a 'manoeuvre' and repeated his demand for the telegram. Barbé replied with some heat that they would be regarded in France as cheap hucksters, protesting that he could not send a telegram repudiating a political campaign waged for the past six months. Stalin rose, apparently very angry, and strode up and down the room, saying again and again that 'Comrade Barbé understands nothing about Bolshevism'. He then left the room, slamming the door loudly. The three departed, not quite knowing what to make of it. Bukharin tried to calm Barbé by telling him that the incident was not serious and that it was necessary to wait. Humbert-Droz thought that there would be time to decide what to do next if the question came before the Latin Secretariat.[67]

Such was Barbé's version. It differed in some respects from Humbert-Droz's—one said that the meeting took place in an office next to Stalin's, the other that it took place in Bukharin's office. Barbé left the distinct impression that Stalin had not backed down at all, as Humbert-Droz has claimed. Nevertheless, the essential point was the same—both Humbert-Droz and Barbé agreed that Stalin had demanded that the Comintern should send a telegram to the French party instructing it to make a deal with the socialists on the second ballot. The telegram had not been sent, in Humbert-Droz's version as a result of his objections, in Barbé's version as a result of *his* objections.

The fourth version came from one who was not present at that meeting in the Kremlin but who was strategically placed to know what was going on. He was Angelo Tasca, whom the Italian Communist Party, of which he had been one of the founders, had sent to Moscow at the end of 1926 to be its representative at the Comintern where he was known as 'Serra'. He also had begun to defy Stalin at the end of 1928 but, unlike Humbert-Droz, had not capitulated and was expelled the following year following a stormy tirade by Stalin against him. He then went to Paris where, as 'A. Leroux', he served in the 1930s as foreign political editor of the French socialist organ, *Le Populaire*, and adviser to the French socialist leader, Léon Blum. Still later, as 'A Rossi', he wrote several well-known and scathingly informative books on the French Communist Party.

Like Humbert-Droz, Tasca had kept an 'archive' of documents and letters during his Comintern period. And in 1966, the Feltrinelli

[67] Henri Barbé, *Souvenirs de Militant et de Dirigeant Communiste*, pp. 160–63. The original typewritten manuscript of 375 pages is held at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace at Stanford University. A later portion of the manuscript has been published in *The Comintern—Historical Highlights*, edited by Milorad M. Drachkovitch and Branko Lazitch (New York: Praeger, 1966), pp. 217–25. Drachkovitch and Lazitch are also the authors of the forthcoming, long-awaited history of the first five years of the Comintern.

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Institute of Milan brought out a first volume of 1,078 pages in the *Annali* series. As it happened, Tasca had not been in agreement with either Humbert-Droz or anyone else on the best policy to pursue in the French elections. Tasca had even kept a notebook and decided one day to record what the issue had been. As a result, we have his version of the dispute. This is what Tasca wrote in part:

> The Russian party (that is, in practice the International) was favourable to an agreement with the Socialists for the second ballot of the French elections. . . . Only the stubborn resistance of the Latin Secretariat (Humbert-Droz, Barbé)—for reasons to be seen—caused the plan to be abandoned, a plan advocated primarily by Stalin ('the left')! [68]

The details need not detain us now. The main thing, as Tasca's editor, Giuseppe Berti, himself a long-time communist leader, recognized, was that Tasca's notes confirmed Humbert-Droz's story, the essential point being that Humbert-Droz had pushed for the extreme leftist line in France against Stalin's wishes.

As Stalin had feared, the immediate practical results of the new line were disastrous. In France, the communists won 14 seats on the second ballot—a loss of 11. The Radical-Socialists lost 14 and the socialists three. With communist support, Barbé estimated, the socialists would have won 50 more; 67 right and right-centre deputies would have been defeated if the Bloc des Gauches had held together.[69] Only Humbert-Droz seemed to be fully satisfied with the result. At the next general election in 1932, the 'class-against-class' policy again prevailed and the number of communist deputies went down to 10. The breach between the three parties did not begin to heal until 1934 and then only because Hitler had come to power in Germany and a fascist threat seemed to be looming in France.

The British party, much weaker than the French, suffered even more. In 1929, the former claimed no more than 4,000 members against over 3,000,000 for the Labour Party. Most British communist leaders, including J. R. Campbell, until then the outstanding figure, were understandably reluctant to cut themselves off from the Labour Party, but the pressure of the Comintern, supported by a minority headed by R. Palme Dutt and Harry Pollitt, proved too much. The electoral programme of the British party for the general election of May 1929 read: 'Class is against class. The Labour Party has chosen the capitalist class. The Communist Party is the party of the working class —the Labour Party is the third capitalist party.' None of the 25 communist candidates were elected; the total communist vote was only 50,000, one tenth of the Labour vote. Dutt, the orthodox communist pundit, demonstrated to his own satisfaction that the election had been

[68] *Annali 1966: I primi dieci anni di vita del Partito Comunista Italiano—Documenti inediti dell'Archivio Angelo Tasca curati e presentati da Giuseppe Berti* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1966), p. 508 (Berti), p. 510 (Tasca). There is another reference on p. 834.

[69] Barbé, *Souvenirs*, p. 167; Hoisington, op. cit. p. 38.

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a gratifying success, and Pollitt was rewarded in August 1929 by being named General Secretary.[70]

The same process took place in Germany. Bukharin continued the Zinovievist policy of sequestering the leaders of the German 'rightists', Heinrich Brandler and August Thalheimer, in Moscow.[71] In February 1928, the German and Russian delegations to the Ninth Plenum of the Comintern met privately and arrived at a confidential agreement to put an end to all 'toleration' of the 'rightists', and to carry out a left turn in united-front policy and trade-union work. Bukharin signed this agreement for the Russians.[72]

There are few events in communist history as well documented by now as 'class against class'. It is clear that it was not 'the consequence of a change in Russian domestic policy', since it came before any such change. Borkenau could not have strayed further from the truth when he wrote that 'there was little resistance within the French Communist Party against the new policy', that 'the French communists simply obeyed', and that the French communists had refused to support the socialists at the second ballot in 1928 'acting upon Stalin's orders'. The 'class against class' slogan was not launched at the Sixth World Congress, but the year before. It was certainly not introduced in connexion with Stalin's rise to power, and he surely did not bear 'major responsibility' for it. Wrong dates often give away wrong interpretations, and this record is abundantly filled with both.

Strangest of all is the new light that has been cast on the roles played by Stalin and Bukharin. The class-against-class line was certainly a turn to the left. Since Stalin had always been represented as the 'leftist' and Bukharin the 'rightist' of this period, we were led to expect that Stalin had supported, if he did not actually conceive it, and that Bukharin must have opposed it. Yet the reality was just the reverse. This is a hard, intransigent fact that the old interpretation of the struggle between Stalin and Bukharin cannot possibly explain.

And it is not the only one.

'CLASS against class' was closely related to another ubiquitous policy-slogan of the third period—'united front from below'.

[70] The most important contemporary documentary source for the change of policy in Britain is *Communist Policy in Great Britain* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1928). This is the report of the British Commission of the Ninth Plenum of the Comintern. The election results are discussed in L. J. Macfarlane, *The British Communist Party* (London: Macgibbon & Kee, 1966), p. 230. Amusingly, the former British communist leader, J. T. Murphy, who resigned in 1932, wrote that 'We formulated the slogan of "Class against Class" and waged our campaigns with this on our banner', as if the British communists had first thought of it (*New Horizons*, John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1941, p. 292).

[71] Hermann Weber, *Die Wandlung des deutschen Kommunismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1969), Vol. II, pp. 84–85 and 321. Brandler was kept in Moscow from 1924 to October 1928 and Thalheimer from 1924 to May 1928.

[72] K. H. Tjaden, *Struktur und Funktion der 'KPD-Opposition' (KPO)* (Meisenheim am Glan: Verlag Anton Hain, 1964), p. 75.

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Its conception long antedated the Stalin-Bukharin split. It was first devised in the early 1920s, temporarily dropped in the mid-1920s, and revived in the late 1920s. But who was responsible for resurrecting it—Stalin or Bukharin? Again the answer is not what one might have been led to expect.

The 'united front' was a striking manifestation of the communist view that different tactical lines corresponded to different objective situations. It was never regarded as right or good in itself. It was first promulgated at the end of 1921 because Lenin—and other Russian communists who lagged behind him in this respect—came to believe that the post-war revolutionary wave had begun to recede. It met with fierce opposition from Western communists who considered it defensive, demeaning, and in general unworthy of genuine revolutionists. On this issue, Lenin and Trotsky had not hesitated to associate themselves with the 'right wing'.[73] The first head of the Comintern, Zinoviev, admitted that the united front would not have become necessary if the Red Army had succeeded in capturing Warsaw in 1920.[74] His successor, Bukharin, once explained to the impatient Westerners: 'Such questions and slogans as, for example, the united front or the workers' government [a euphemism for the proletarian dictatorship] or the capital levy are slogans that are founded on a very fluctuating basis. This basis rests on a certain depression within the labour movement.'[75] And when the Comintern decided that the depression had lifted and the third period had arrived, Bukharin's successor, Manuilsky, justified a left turn on the ground that the united front rose whenever the revolutionary wave declined and the united front declined whenever the revolutionary wave rose.[76]

In effect, one sure sign of a right turn was the willingness or eagerness of communists to make deals and alliances with other movements or parties. A left turn was just as unmistakably manifested by a rupture with and war to the death on them. In the 1920s, the socialist or Social-Democratic parties and the so-called reformist trade union movements, which had forged far ahead of the communists by the middle of the decade, were mainly the objects of the communists' united-front attention. In this sense, the 'class-against-class' electoral tactic was little more than a variant in the leftist application of the united front.

In 1922, when the new united-front tactics were first codified, three types were recognized—'from below', 'from above', and a combination of the two. In principle, one precondition of the united front was supposed to be 'the leadership of the communist vanguard'. The 'united front from below' was contrived to enable the communists to have

[73] Lenin, 'Notes of a Publicist', March 1922, in *Selected Works*, vol. X, p. 310; Trotsky, *The First Five Years of the Communist International* (New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1945), vol. II, p. 38.

[74] *Die Taktik der Kommunistischen Internationale gegen die Offensive des Kapitals* (Verlag der Kommunistischen Internationale, 1922), p. 35.

[75] *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale* (Verlag der Kommunistischen Internationale, 1923), p. 421.

[76] Manuilsky, *The Communist International*, 28 June 1929, p. 666.

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their political cake and eat it too. 'From below' meant in practice that the united front could have non-communists in its rank-and-file but not in its leadership, which was reserved for communists and fellow-travellers. 'United front organizations' came to mean nominally autonomous auxiliaries, led by communists, to attract mass support for a specific cause. A united front from above was one made wholly with leaders of other workers' organizations. In theory, it was never permissible. However, where the communists found themselves in a hopeless minority, as in England, a combination of the two was allowed 'as a method of agitation and mobilization of the masses, and not as a method of political coalition with the Social-Democracy'. In special circumstances, then, the communists could 'negotiate' with the leaders of other parties primarily to get at the masses behind them and win them away.[77]

The application of the united front differed according to the nature of the three periods. Only with the waning of the first was the united front introduced at all. In the second, controversial united fronts were made with the Kuomintang in China and the Trades Union Congress in Britain and there were *liaisons dangereuses* in other countries. There is some doubt whether Trotsky was always opposed to these or whether he merely thought that they lasted too long,[78] but in any case, after 1927 Trotsky used them as horrible examples of impermissible 'united fronts from above'. Just about the time Trotsky publicly condemned the Stalin-Bukharin Chinese policy in March 1927, however, Bukharin and Humbert-Droz were beginning to make their left turn in France and Britain. The electoral break with the French socialists and British Labourites was implicitly a return to the 'united front from below'.

Thus it should again occasion little surprise that Bukharin used the Russian party congress in December 1927 to restore the 'united front from below' to its originally favoured status.[79] Stalin did not choose to go quite as far at the same congress, and contented himself with merely referring to strengthening the 'workers' united front' *tout court*.[80] There is no reason to believe that Stalin was as yet dictating to Bukharin or that the latter had to be coerced at this

[77] *Resolutions and Theses of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1923), pp. 30–31. The best short treatment is in Jane Degras, 'United Front Tactics in the Comintern 1921–1928', *International Communism*, St. Antony's Papers, No. 9 (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960), pp. 9–22.

[78] Macfarlane points out, on the basis of a document in the Trotsky archives, that Trotsky denied as late as May 1926 that there had ever existed 'any dispute over the justification for the creation of the Anglo-Russian Committee as an element in the policy of the United Front' (p. 153, note 75). Deutscher goes to some pains to dispose 'of one of the legends of vulgar Trotskyism which maintains that the Opposition had from the beginning unremittingly resisted Stalin's and Bukharin's "betrayal of the Chinese Revolution"' (*The Prophet Unarmed*, p. 321). It might be added that Trotsky did nothing to discourage this legend.

[79] *International Press Correspondence*, 29 December 1927, p. 1676.

[80] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. X, p. 297.

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time to resurrect the 'united front from below'. It was quite in keeping with the line Bukharin had been taking on 'class against class' for most of that year, which cannot be said of Stalin and especially of Stalin's reaction to the first ballot in France four months later.

Here, too, the accepted version of Bukharin's notorious 'rightism' seems strangely lacking in verisimilitude. If Bukharin's adoption of the 'united front from below' was forced on him by Stalin, one wonders why Stalin did not use it himself when he had the opportunity to do so on the same occasion. The existing evidence, available for over 40 years, has been all but ignored, and no new convincing evidence has been brought forward to account for the discrepancy.

PERHAPS the most portentous and malignant aspect of the third period was the theory and practice known as 'social-fascism'.

This, too, went back to Zinoviev's time. A German student seems to have discovered the first use of the term earlier than had been previously suspected.[81] In *Izvestia*, the organ of the Soviet government, an inconspicuous little news item of only five lines appeared at the very bottom of page 1 on 12 November 1922. It read:

Social-Fascists

BORDEAUX, November 10 [1922]. (French press radio). According to reports from Rome, the Socialist (reformist) fraction of the Italian Chamber has decided to support Mussolini's cabinet.

It was a strange beginning for a strange theory. Bordeaux was a curious place of origin for a rumour emanating from Rome. Early in October 1922, the Italian Socialist Party had held a congress at which a split had occurred, resulting in the formation of a new, 'reformist' *Partito Socialista Unitario Italiano*, headed by the veteran Filippo Turati. At the end of that same month, Mussolini had staged his 'March on Rome' and had formed his first cabinet. Mussolini's initial government was not exclusively fascist and contained representatives of the Social-Democratic, Popolari (Catholic), and Liberal parties. Fascism was still a novel, problematic phenomenon (to itself probably

[81] Wolfgang Eichwede, *Revolution und internationale Politik* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1971), p. 97. The author mentions in passing this news item and the next reference of 28 December 1922, but does not give any of the text. To my knowledge, however, he is the first to have unearthed them. I am indebted to Professor Robert C. Tucker of Princeton University for translation from the Russian. I tried to trace the early history of 'social-fascism' in *Commentary* (New York), February 1969, pp. 29–42, but did not then know of this use in 1922. Two other studies have not gone back far enough: Siegfried Bahne, '"Sozialfaschismus" in Deutschland' (*International Review of Social History*, Vol. X, 1965, Part 2, pp. 211–45), and Peer H. Lange, *Stalinismus versus 'Sozialfaschismus' und 'Nationalfaschismus'* (Göppingen: Verlag Alfred Kümmerle, 1969). These are both full of careful research but Bahne restricted himself to Germany and Lange picked up the thread of the story in 1928.

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as well as to everyone else), and the Italian communists at first considered it to be merely another bourgeois movement.[82]

The report from Rome in *Izvestia* proved to be in error. When the Italian Chamber met on 17 November, Turati did not support Mussolini. On the contrary, he denounced the new government so unsparingly that Mussolini repeatedly interrupted him with 'aggressive, ironic and violent' invective.[83] Nevertheless, the same heading, 'Social-Fascists', appeared a second time in *Izvestia* (28 December 1922), above a longer article which again denounced the Unitarian Socialists under Turati as well as—and with better cause—the Italian Federation of Labour, headed by Ludovico d'Aragona.

There is thus the possibility that the term was invented by a headline-writer on the basis of a false news report. The term itself stemmed from a Bolshevik tradition hallowed by Lenin himself. Lenin was fond of hyphenating 'social' to make up a whole family of anathemas hurled at the accursed pro-war Social-Democrats. Among his most uncomplimentary epithets were 'social-patriot', 'social-chauvinist', 'social-imperialist', and 'social-traitor'. Thus it needed little originality to add 'social-fascist' to the list. Nevertheless, there was more to the new term of abuse than merely a repetition of the old.

The Comintern's Fourth Congress also took place in November–December 1922 when the term 'social-fascist' first appeared in print and much of the congress was devoted to a discussion of the new fascist phenomenon. In the penultimate speech of his life, Lenin touched briefly on Italy. 'Perhaps the fascists in Italy, for example, will render us a great service by explaining to the Italians that they are not yet sufficiently enlightened and that their country is not yet insured against the Black Hundreds', he said optimistically. 'Perhaps this will be very useful.'[84] His attitude was not unlike that of Stalin in the face of Hitler's assumption of power more than 10 years later—that the German fascists were doing the communists' work for them. Zinoviev spoke at much greater length on the fascist menace at the congress, and he for the first time expressed the theory of social-fascism in a rudimentary form

[82] Paolo Spriano, *Storia del Partito comunista italiano* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967), Vol. I, p. 237. Spriano also notes a premonition of the idea of 'social-fascism' over a year earlier by the 'ultra-leftist' Italian communist leader, Amadeo Bordiga, who was the bane of Lenin and Zinoviev. In *Il Soviet*, 15 May 1921, Bordiga wrote: 'Fascists and Social-Democrats are two aspects of the same enemy of tomorrow' (p. 127). Further research may yet turn up other anticipations of the basic idea and show how common it was even in this early period.

[83] *Le Temps* (Paris), 19 November 1922, p. 2. The rumour that Mussolini's first ministry would be supported by everyone but the left socialists and communists appeared in *Le Temps* of 13 November 1922, p. 1. Thus the *Izvestia* news item was probably based on a French source and, for some reason, attributed to a radio agency in Bordeaux.

[84] Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. X, p. 333. Soon after the congress, in an interview with the British journalist Arthur Ransome, Lenin was still unable to take Mussolini seriously and apparently 'flung back his head in laughter to think of the fascists (Mussolini ruling in Rome—"A merry story!")' (Louis Fischer, *The Life of Lenin*, 1964, p. 624). The interview was published in the *Manchester Guardian*, 22 November 1922.

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without as yet using the term itself. In a comment on a statement by Edmondo Rossoni, head of the newly formed national organization of fascist syndicates, Zinoviev said:

> Here you see, comrades, the ideology of this fascist syndicalism. It is the ideology of the lower middle class, which is actually not so far removed from that of Social-Democracy as is sometimes thought. The ideology is basically the same in another form. One may say that it is rather the Noske-like form of Social-Democracy under Italian conditions. One could quite well advance and defend this thesis. Modern fascism in Italy is not so far removed from Noske's Social-Democracy, adapted to the given Italian relationships. It is no accident that the reformists, the Italian Noskes, are fraternizing with the fascists.[85]

Gustav Noske was the German Social-Democratic official who had used the army to put down the Spartacus revolt in 1919, his name having thus become a byword for Social-Democratic counter-revolution. Turati and his followers, whatever their shortcomings, hardly deserved to be linked with Noske's ill fame; Turati at the age of 70 went into exile in 1927, smuggled out in a motor boat by the anti-fascist martyr Carlo Roselli. Zinoviev, however, was not one to make nice distinctions, and the resolution of the fourth congress on the Italian Question followed his line: 'The real forerunners and precursors of fascism are unquestionably the reformists.'[86]

The *Izvestia* headline-writer, then, was reflecting a view that must have been very much in the air in Moscow, so much so that the same idea made an appearance the following year in an introduction written by Earl Browder, then a communist trade-union editor in Chicago, for a pamphlet by Andrés Nin, an early Spanish communist leader.

Browder ventured the opinion that, as in Italy, where Mussolini had been a former socialist, 'so we may expect the real fascist leadership in America to spring from the Gompers bureaucracy [in the American Federation of Labour]' and that there was an 'affinity between the AF of L bureaucracy and the fascist idea'.[87] Browder probably owed something to inspiration from abroad.

The next stage of the theory of 'social-fascism' came in connexion with German affairs. The German communists suffered two disastrous setbacks in October 1923—the take-over by the German Army of the states of Saxony and Thuringia where communists shared power in the local governments and the communist débacle in Hamburg. Four Social-Democrats served in the government of Gustav Stresemann, which also put down Hitler's 'beer hall *Putsch*' in Munich the following

[85] *Protokoll des Vierten Kongresses der Kommunistischen Internationale*, p. 920.
[86] Ibid. p. 999.
[87] Introduction by Earl Browder to Andrés Nin, *Struggle of the Trade Unions Against Fascism* (Chicago: Trade Union Educational League, 1923), p. 6. Nin left the Spanish Communist Party in 1931 or 1932 and later became a leader of the revolutionary but anti-communist POUM in Catalonia. He was assassinated by Soviet secret police agents in Spain in 1937 during the Civil War.

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month. In a post-mortem in Moscow in January 1924, Zinoviev came forth with the fully developed theory of social-fascism. In an outburst of frustration and fury, he brought together a rather mixed group—Marshal Joseph Pilsudski of Poland, Turati and d'Aragona of Italy, a Bulgarian socialist minister, and J. Ramsay MacDonald of the British Labour Party.

> What are Pilsudski and the others? Fascist Social-Democrats. Were they this 10 years ago? No. It goes without saying that they were already then fascists *in nuce*. But they have become fascists precisely because we are living in the epoch of revolution. What is Italian Social-Democracy? It is a wing of the fascists; Turati is a fascist Social-Democrat. Could this statement have been made five years ago? No. Think of a group of academicians who gradually developed into a bourgeois force. Italian Social-Democracy is now a fascist Social-Democracy. Take Turati, d'Aragona or the present Bulgarian government socialists. They were opportunists, but could one say 10 years ago that they were fascist Social-Democrats? No, that would have been stupid then. Now they are that.

Once launched on his high-pitched oratory, Zinoviev went even further. He seized on MacDonald's name to go from some Social-Democrats and some Social-Democratic parties to Social-Democracy as a whole everywhere:

> You may hurl insults at MacDonald: You are a traitor, a servant of the bourgeoisie. But we must understand in what period we are living. International Social-Democracy has now become a wing of fascism.[88]

Zinoviev, then, was the original exponent of the basic idea of 'social-fascism'. It was not, as he explained, merely an old stick with a new name with which to beat Social-Democracy. There was something new and different about it owing to the new and different epoch in which it arose. In the middle of 1924, Giacomo Matteoti was murdered by Mussolini's killers for having most courageously defied the fascist regime. Matteoti was the secretary of Turati's party.[89] It was a strange way for one wing of fascism to act against the other.

Eight months after Zinoviev's 'wing of fascism' speech and three months after Matteoti's murder, Stalin, who was then allied with Zinoviev, took up the theme for the first time. In an article entitled 'Concerning the International Situation', published on 20 September 1924, and noteworthy as his first effort in this field, Stalin wrote: 'Social Democracy is objectively the moderate wing of fascism' and, again, 'They are not antipodes, they are twins'.[90] No great originality was required to play these slight variations on Zinoviev's themes.

Here again, the existing literature is almost wholly fictitious. In his 1938 book, Borkenau placed the communist cry of 'social-fascism' in

[88] *Die Lehren der deutschen Ereignisse* (Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf., 1924), pp. 69–70.
[89] W. Hilton-Young, *The Italian Left* (London: Longmans, Green, 1949), pp. 135–38.
[90] Stalin, *Works*, vol. VI, pp. 294–95.

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1929–30.[91] In his 1953 book, he flatly declared that 'in 1929, it was discovered that the Social-Democrats were—"social-fascists"'.[92] Basing himself on Borkenau, Barrington Moore Jr. thought that the Social-Democrats were 'branded as "social fascists"' at the Sixth World Congress in 1928.[93] Seton-Watson imagined that the term was invented after the Sixth World Congress.[94] Deutscher identified it with Stalin's removal of Bukharin from the Comintern in 1929.[95] Ruth Fischer expounded the thesis that the 'new theorem of "social-fascism" which Stalin enunciated in person' came in 1929–33.[96] R. Palme Dutt, who should certainly have known better, confidently explained that the Comintern had decided on the 'social-fascist' character of Social-Democracy after the May Day 1929 demonstration in Berlin.[97] Only one old book traced the idea as far back as Zinoviev in 1924, and this, curiously, was the early one by C. L. R. James.[98]

As long as he headed the Comintern, Zinoviev continued to refer to Social-Democracy as such or to its 'top layer' as a 'wing of fascism'. From the end of 1922 to the beginning of 1926, this view was never challenged. But at the last plenum headed by Zinoviev, the Sixth, in February 1926, an objection to the term was voiced by the venerable German communist, Clara Zetkin. She started out by agreeing wholeheartedly with Zinoviev in principle. He had been right, she said, to characterize the actions of the Social-Democratic leaders as fascist in nature. She was so enthusiastic about the proposition that she offered to put her name to it not only with both hands 'but with hands and feet'. But was it 'wise and right' to speak out openly in this vein at that moment? The trouble was that so many communists were not fully trained and experienced; they sometimes made a caricature of the party line. This difficulty was especially acute in the trade unions, made up predominantly of Social-Democratic workers, who responded to the social-fascist formula by questioning the communists' 'unity policy'. She urged that a distinction should be made between the Social-Democratic leaders and the 'misled masses'—a distinction, she said, which 'our comrades in the factories had often forgotten'. Factory workers could not understand the communists saying to them, as trade unionists, 'With all my heart, Brother Proletarian, we want a united front with you in the trade unions', and then addressing them as Social-Democratic party members: 'You fascist, you traitor, I'll crack your head open.'[99]

91 *The Communist International*, pp. 341–42.
92 *European Communism*, p. 70.
93 *Soviet Politics—The Dilemma of Power* (1950), p. 107. The footnote refers to Borkenau's *The Communist International*.
94 *The Pattern of Communist Revolution*, p. 107.
95 *Stalin*, p. 405.
96 Ruth Fischer, *Stalin and German Communism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 655.
97 R. Palme Dutt, *The Internationale* (London, 1964), p. 209
98 *World Revolution 1917–1936*, pp. 309–10.
99 *Protokoll* (Sixth Plenum), pp. 252–53.

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Significantly, even Clara Zetkin could not or would not criticize the social-fascist 'formula' in principle. Her reasons for discontinuing its use were largely practical and aimed at the Social-Democratic workers, not their leaders. In any case, the term was temporarily shelved at the Seventh Plenum at the end of 1926, when Bukharin succeeded Zinoviev. The latter, however, refused to give up so easily and insisted even at this plenum that he was right to characterize Social-Democracy as a 'wing of fascism'.[1]

Nevertheless, Bukharin did not spare the Social-Democrats. On the contrary, he stepped up the campaign against them, without using the offensive term. At the Seventh Plenum, Bukharin declared: 'The exposure of and struggle against Social-Democracy must become one of the most important tasks of the Comintern. . . . The Social-Democratic parties have become to an even higher degree than previously the direct support of bourgeois regimes. . . . Social Democracy is a yellow organization which must be smashed for the working class to triumph.'[2] At the Russian 15th Party Congress at the end of 1927, when he revived the 'united front from below', Bukharin used even sharper language: 'Never before has there been such glaring general disagreement between us, communists and Social-Democrats. Never before has such a gulf divided us.'[3]

With this background, it is easier to understand the revival of the social-fascist theme in 1928. It had been retired from public view for less than two years. There has been much misinterpretation of the social-fascist theory because it was not realized how deeply rooted it was in the early years of the Comintern.

The reappearance of the theory is even more problematic than its original incarnation. It was broached again, in a relatively mild form, by Bukharin, in connexion with the 'Draft Programme' which he prepared for the Comintern's Sixth World Congress.

Bukharin was chairman and Humbert-Droz secretary of the commission which prepared this document, considered the most important to be submitted to the congress. One of Bukharin's favourite projects, he took personal charge of it, and the Programme Commission adopted it on 25 May 1928. In the midst of a customary denunciation of Social-Democracy, one passage seemed to go somewhat further: 'The bourgeoisie resorts alternately to the methods of fascism or to the methods of coalition with Social-Democracy, according to the changes in the political situation. In this Social-Democracy not infrequently plays an openly fascist role (Noske in Germany, the Polish Socialist Party, etc.).'[4] Bukharin's main point, however, was the traditional one that fascism and Social-Democracy were different forms of bourgeois rule, the one by

[1] *Protokoll* (Seventh Plenum), p. 563.
[2] *Protokoll*, op. cit. p. 117.
[3] *Report of the XV Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (London: Communist Party of Great Britain, 1928), p. 226.
[4] 'Draft Programme of the Communist International', *International Press Correspondence*, 6 June 1928, p. 553.

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using terrorist methods, the other by encouraging working-class passivity, The examples of Social-Democracy's 'openly fascist role' were so extreme that they might have seemed to be exceptional and not necessarily inherent in the nature of Social-Democracy.

In any event, Bukharin did not make use of the term 'social-fascism' in the Draft Programme. On the eve of the Sixth World Congress, Bukharin had a secret meeting with L. B. Kamenev, then a leader of the doomed anti-Stalin Opposition, to whom he confided: 'Stalin has messed up the programme for me in dozens of places. *He* wanted to read a report on this subject to the Central Committee himself. I had great difficulty in preventing him.'[5] This reference to the Draft Programme has caused considerable confusion. It suggested that Stalin had forced Bukharin to adopt some phrases or portions of the Draft Programme against the latter's better judgment, but what they were could only be guessed at. Later, as we shall see, Stalin publicly revealed that the Russian delegation to the congress, which he controlled, had disagreed with Bukharin's 'theses' on the international situation. But these disagreements seemed to refer to Bukharin's opening report on 'The International Situation and the Tasks of the Comintern' rather than to the Draft Programme. None of the disagreements, as Stalin told the story, actually referred to 'social-fascism' as such. In addition, Humbert-Droz has recently stated that the Draft Programme was 'sharply discussed inside the Russian Political Bureau and very considerably [*sensiblement*] modified, so that the texts proposed by the Russians, being contradictory, could lend themselves to different interpretations'.[6] This tells us little more than what we knew before—that some changes were made in Bukharin's draft—but we still do not know whether they had anything to do with social-fascism and, whatever they were, they were sufficiently equivocal to give him a great deal of leeway.[7]

We can be sure, however, that a more extreme version of social-fascism than the one presented by Bukharin was proposed in the drafting commission. The term itself was first revived publicly by Josef Lenz, the party name of Dr. Joseph Winternitz, who was chairman of the German party's Programme Commission. In a discussion article which appeared in the German party's theoretical organ, dated 1 June 1928, Lenz wrote that 'reformism' was recently manifesting 'developing tendencies in the

[5] This version is taken from Boris Souvarine, *Stalin* (New York: Alliance Book Corp., 1939), p. 484. The original is in the Trotsky Archives.

[6] *De Lénine à Staline*, p. 306.

[7] Löwy's biography of Bukharin, *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*, further confuses the story. He has the Austrian communist, Heinrich Glaubauf (whose brother Fritz was Löwy's informant), as Secretary of the Programme Commission instead of Humbert-Droz. Fritz Glaubauf told Löwy: 'When the work started, Bukharin still came out with his views. After a quarrel, Molotov brought with him always completely formulated proposals, which were then adopted' (p. 352). A few pages later, Löwy quotes from a Czechoslovak representative on the commission, Paul Reimann: 'The discussion in the Programme Commission was objective [*sachlich*] and not influenced by inter-party arguments [*auseinandersetzungen*]' (p. 358). The testimony of Fritz Glaubauf was second-hand and seems to differ from that of Reimann. Löwy's uncritical use of such material undermines confidence in his work.

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direction of social-fascism '.[8] Subsequently, an article appeared in the Comintern's own theoretical organ, signed only with the initial 'M', praising Lenz's treatment of the question of social-fascism as 'highly successful and quite suitable for inclusion in the text of the programme '.[9] Yet Lenz's formula was not included in the text of the programme adopted by the full commission.

There was something peculiar in all this. The Germans were pushing for a much harder line against Social-Democracy, up to the use of the deliberately odious term, 'social-fascism'. But the Germans were not alone; they clearly received encouragement and support inside the Comintern. Yet Bukharin was permitted by the Stalin-controlled Russian top leadership to reject Lenz's version in favour of a much weaker one. Usually, this would have been enough to persuade the Germans to desist. Instead, the Germans published Lenz's article and continued to push their own line on social-fascism. Despite the apparent decision in the Programme Commission, the question remained open, as if there had been some kind of agreement to disagree.

Stalin had an opportunity to settle the argument in his speech on 'The Programme of the Comintern' at the Russian party plenum on 5 July 1928, almost two weeks before the opening of the Comintern's Congress. His only reference to the subject was a passage in which he opposed removing a paragraph on Social-Democracy from the Draft Programme.[10] He was clearly not yet prepared to take sides openly on the question of social-fascism. Stalin happened to speak a good deal in the next few days, and the harshest thing he said about Social-Democracy was that it 'is the main channel of imperialist pacifism within the working class—consequently, it is capitalism's main support among the working class in preparing for new wars and intervention '.[11] He always used the more respectful term 'Social-Democracy', without an intimation that it was becoming something else or something worse.

Yet, when Bukharin broached the theme at the Sixth World Congress, he seemed to combine Lenz's version with his own in the draft programme. First, he said that 'there is not the slightest doubt that Social-Democracy reveals a social-fascist tendency'. But he immediately cautioned that it was merely a tendency and that 'it would be a mistake to lump Social-Democracy and fascism together '.[12] A 'tendency' was not the thing itself, but came perceptibly closer to it.

At the congress itself, two points of view clearly emerged. The hard line was represented by the German leader, Ernst Thaelmann. He declared: 'The development of reformism into social-fascism is a pheno-

[8] Josef Lenz, 'Die Fragen des Programme', *Die Internationale*, 1 June 1928, p. 356.
[9] M., 'The Course of the Discussion of the Draft Programme', *The Communist International*, 15 August 1928, p. 401. If 'M' was Manuilsky or Martynov, it would be safe to assume that Stalin was behind the kind words for Lenz's position. But it is probably best not to guess too much and to let the facts speak for themselves.
[10] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XI, pp. 150–51.
[11] Ibid. p. 210.
[12] *International Press Correspondence*, 4 September 1928, p. 1039.

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menon, which one can illustrate with various examples in various countries.'[13] Lenz had had reformism developing 'tendencies' towards social-fascism; Thaelmann had those tendencies already developed into social-fascism, especially in Germany. Bukharin's treatment of the question in his report was even further from Thaelmann's than it had been from Lenz's.

The Italian leader, Ercoli (Palmiro Togliatti), represented what might be called the soft line. He said:

> Our opinion on this point is that it is entirely correct to make clear that there exist very obvious ideological ties between fascism and social-democracy. In some cases there exist organic ties and, in general, social-democracy uses openly fascist methods in certain cases and in certain circumstances. But even in this field too, it is necessary to guard against excessive generalizations because there are profound differences between fascism, which is, in general, as a mass movement, a movement of the lower and middle bourgeoisie dominated by the big bourgeoisie and landowners, and which does not have a basis in the traditional organization of the working class, and the application of fascist methods by social-democracy, which is a movement that has a working-class and petty-bourgeois basis and draws its force mainly from an organization which is recognized by the great mass of workers as the traditional organization of their class.[14]

Here we have a different emphasis. As in the case of Clara Zetkin two years earlier, Togliatti started out by agreeing in principle with the idea of social-fascism. But he hastened to warn against using it too loosely and indiscriminately. His main point seemed to be that Social-Democracy sometimes coincided with fascism in its ideology and 'methods' but never in its social basis—a key distinction for a communist who also considered himself to be a Marxist. Since Togliatti was then considered close to Bukharin, the former's views have taken on a special significance.

The Congress's decisions on this question were closer to the ideas expressed by Togliatti than to those of Thaelmann. One resolution declared that Social-Democratic ideology 'has many points of contact with fascism' and that the Social-Democratic parties employed fascist methods 'in a rudimentary form'.[15] The programme as finally adopted

[13] *Protokoll* (Sixth Congress), Vol. I, p. 303.

[14] I have gone back to the original Italian version of this passage published in *Rinascita*, 11 July 1964, p. 18. The quotation in Spriano, op. cit. Vol. II, p. 176, omits two lines (from 'very obvious' to 'ties and', in the first and second sentences). This undoubtedly inadvertent omission weakens the sense of the first part of Togliatti's exposition. The German version in the *Protokoll* (Sixth Congress), Vol. I, p. 449, and the English version in *International Press Correspondence*, 23 August 1928, p. 941, take some liberties with the original text, which I have tried to render as literally as possible. Togliatti had previously contributed an article to *The Communist International* (German edition), 25 July 1928, warning against confusing fascism with Social-Democracy (pp. 1687, 1690).

[15] 'The International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist International', ibid. 23 November 1928, p. 1571.

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stated that 'in the process of development Social-Democracy reveals fascist tendencies', but could still act in some political situations as an opposition party against a bourgeois government.[16] This point—a single sentence in a long document—was hardly stressed. If Stalin was calling the tune at the Sixth Congress, he was not yet ready to go all the way on the question of social-fascism.

Seven months later, in April 1929, Stalin revealed that Bukharin had run into trouble during the Sixth World Congress in the Russian delegation on about 20 points. One complained that Bukharin had emphasized the fight against Social-Democracy but not against 'left' Social-Democracy. But Stalin did not complain about Bukharin's handling of 'social-fascism', and Stalin never used the term himself, still contenting himself with repeated references to Social-Democracy.[17]

Until now, it has been believed that Bukharin was wholly opposed to the concept of social-fascism and that Stalin had forced it on him, at least as far as Bukharin had gone in the Draft Programme and in his own report to the Sixth Congress. This belief was based on a passage in Professor Daniels' book: 'Behind the scenes, Bukharin expressed opinions which belied his official view of the right danger. To the Swiss Comintern secretary, Humbert-Droz, then under attack as a rightist deviator, Bukharin wrote to express sympathy with the idea that the communists' best interest lay in alliances with the Social Democrats against fascism. He apologized for not being able to support this position in public because of the critical situation which he faced within the Communist Party of Russia.' As his authority for this startling revelation, Professor Daniels gave 'Bukharin to J. Humbert-Droz, September 1928 (Humbert-Droz Archive)'.[18] Other writers took this story on trust, and it has bedevilled the subject for over a decade.

Bukharin's alleged avowal was suspect for at least three reasons: Humbert-Droz did not come under attack until after September 1928; the citation did not have a day in its date; and there was no direct quotation from it, as one might have expected from such a juicy morsel. I went through the Humbert-Droz Archive twice without being able to find such a letter. In puzzlement, I wrote to Professor Daniels, and he has informed me that it was all a 'mistake', based on hearsay.

It is also dangerous to assume that statements made by Humbert-Droz, Clara Zetkin or Togliatti necessarily reflected Bukharin's own thought.[19] Two months after the Sixth Congress, in November 1928, Humbert-Droz, already under fire, made a lengthy declaration in which he touched on his understanding of the relationship between fascism and Social-Democracy. 'The Sixth World Congress often emphasized that it is not Social-Democracy which utilizes fascist methods, but that fascist methods are often Social-Democratic methods, that Noske came before

[16] Ibid. 31 December 1928, p. 1754.
[17] Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XII, pp. 23–4.
[18] *The Conscience of the Revolution*, pp. 335–36 and p. 497, note 83.
[19] This applies especially to Löwy's *Die Weltgeschichte ist das Weltgericht*, e.g. p. 353.

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Mussolini, etc.,' he said. 'In reality there is no fascization of Social-Democracy, but fascism is an expression of the evolution of Social-Democracy.'[20] Whatever Humbert-Droz was trying to say here, it was not intended to undercut the theory of social-fascism. He apparently sought to make fascism an outgrowth of Social-Democracy rather than make Social-Democracy a late-comer to fascism. This trend of thought went back to Zinoviev's original point of view and hardly represented an obstacle to the adoption of a hard line on social-fascism.

This was as far as the revival of social-fascism went in 1928. It tells us much about Stalin's methods and Bukharin's weakness, and why the opposition to this deadly policy was so ineffective. Stalin bided his time and never showed his hand. He may have acted through the German communists or the 'M' who signed the article in the Comintern's organ recommending Lenz's line. But, except for Stalin's reference to Social-Democracy as the 'moderate wing of fascism' in September 1924, there is nothing in the record to show that he took responsibility for the idea again or that he actually used the term 'social-fascism'. In 1924, it should be remembered, Stalin was merely echoing Zinoviev in almost the exact words. Yet Stalin's formulas of 1924 became the *locus classicus* of the concept when it staged its comeback at the end of the decade. Once Stalin took it over, all vestiges of its origins in Zinoviev's time were obliterated, and the operation was so successful that, as we have seen, even most historians have attributed it to Stalin or have ascribed it to the Stalinist period.

There is also nothing in the record to indicate that Bukharin ever criticized or dissociated himself from the theory of social-fascism. Unlike Zinoviev and Stalin, however, he never openly espoused it. When it was retired in 1926, he never publicly explained why or what was wrong with it, and if Clara Zetkin spoke for him early that year, her reasoning was purely tactical, not one of principle.

What happened in 1928 is more obscure and debatable. Did Bukharin inject into the Draft Programme an allusion to the not infrequently 'openly fascist role' of Social-Democracy and a reference in his Sixth Congress report to an undoubted 'social-fascist tendency' because Stalin had forced them on him? But the Stalinists at this time were going much further and wanted, as Thaelmann put it, to recognize 'the development of reformism into social-fascism', not as a tendency but as a 'phenomenon'. Does this mean that Bukharin settled for a 'compromise' in his own treatment of the theme at the Sixth World Congress? If so, what were the opposing views that were being 'compromised'? Were they Bukharin's total rejection of the theory of social-fascism and the Stalinists' total acceptance of it? The difficulty is that we have no reason to believe that Bukharin or his associates ever totally rejected the theory. We have to guess what Bukharin himself might have thought from the positions taken by two of those closest to him at this time.

[20] *De Lénine à Staline*, p. 335.

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Humbert-Droz and Togliatti. Humbert-Droz, as we have seen, continued to believe in the original Zinovievist version of social-fascism—that fascism was an outgrowth of Social-Democracy. Togliatti came closest to challenging the concept in principle—that fascism and Social-Democracy had different social or class bases. But even Togliatti agreed that fascism and Social-Democracy were ideologically and sometimes organically linked and that sometimes the latter openly used the methods of the former.

It would be foolhardy to try to read Bukharin's mind at this distance in time and with this dearth of evidence. About all we can safely say is that the concept of social-fascism was too deeply rooted in the communist past for it to be rejected or opposed *in toto* by the end of the 1920s. It could be shelved for a time for tactical reasons, but they were more persuasive in 1926, when capitalist stabilization was still going strong, than in 1928, when a new revolutionary wave was supposed to be coming in. Bukharin, it must again be recalled, was carrying out a left turn of his own, and it demanded an increasingly virulent anti-Social-Democratic line. Bukharin and Togliatti seem to have found themselves in an equivocal position. They went along with the idea of social-fascism, at least in an attenuated form, but tried to warn against pushing it too far or too crudely. In the end, the distinctions were swept away in the Stalinist onslaught.

Yet, there were distinctions between the Bukharinist line and what soon came to be the Stalinist line. The fact remains that those who pushed for the most extreme version of social-fascism proved to be the most subservient Stalinists, among them Thaelmann. But one should also resist the temptation to oversimplify and exaggerate the differences between the Bukharinists and the Stalinists. The former did not have a strong, consistent uniform ' party line ', and they were unable or unwilling to make a fight on the issue of social-fascism in principle. Here again it was quite possible for Bukharin to start what Stalin finished.

WE have now reexamined the conception of the third period, class against class, the united front from below, and social-fascism. In the first three cases, and to some extent in the fourth, the signs pointed to Bukharin rather than to Stalin. Yet the existing literature for about 40 years has given all the credit or blame to Stalin rather than to Bukharin.

What is the trouble?

The misunderstanding has come from the fact that there were two ' left turns '—a Bukharinist and a Stalinist. The former prepared the way for the latter, but this does not mean that they were the same thing. Beginning with ' class against class ' in the spring of 1927, Bukharin and Humbert-Droz started to make a left turn in Comintern policy, for a time without and even against Stalin.

It has been assumed that Bukharin's allegedly rightist line in Soviet domestic policy must have carried over to his leadership of the Comin-

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tern. The traditional dichotomy of Bukharin the rightist and Stalin the leftist has been mechanically carried over from internal Russian affairs—where it has also been grossly oversimplified—to the Comintern, as if Bukharin necessarily believed that what was good for the Russian peasant was also good for the European worker. In any case, 'class against class' was a left turn, whatever one may think of it, and it was no less a left turn because it was Bukharinist in origin.

Yet the same words could be interpreted to mean different things or could be applied to different situations. When this happened, the Bukharinists drew back in dismay. They had started something which they were not prepared to finish, at least as Stalin finished it.

For example, Humbert-Droz had thought of 'class against class' primarily in electoral terms. He has vainly protested in his memoirs that he had never envisaged it as a means of fighting the Socialist party but rather as a device for detaching it from the bourgeois Radical-Socialists in order to create a socialist-communist bloc.[21] It is hard to take this belated self-justification seriously; it makes a mystery of Humbert-Droz's vehement opposition to Stalin's proposal that a deal should be made with the socialists on the second ballot in 1928 and of the mechanical transference of the new line from France to Britain where it mainly served to separate the communists from the Labour Party. But if Humbert-Droz was willing to sponsor a split with the socialists electorally, he was unwilling to back a split in the trade-union field. Yet once 'class against class' was applied in one field, it was hard to hold it back in another.

In most countries at this time, the Red International of Labour Unions (RILU), usually known as the Profintern, a telescoping of the Russian form of the name, was still mainly a propaganda organization. Its leader, S. A. Lozovsky, was an expert at guessing which way the wind was blowing in the Russian party and in the Comintern. He had always wanted to form independent communist trade-union movements in as many countries as possible to add to the Profintern's power and prestige, but he had been held back by resistance in the Comintern. In April 1927, while Humbert-Droz was trying to put across the 'class against class' electoral line in France, he complained bitterly to Togliatti, his confidant in Paris, that he was also forced to wage 'a continual war with Lozovsky' who was everywhere pushing 'his policy of splitting'.[22] In February 1928, Humbert-Droz and Togliatti barely succeeded in fending off another effort by Lozovsky in the Comintern to split the trade-union movement everywhere.[23] But at the Profintern's own Fourth Congress in March 1928, Lozovsky began to have his way by putting through instruc-

[21] *De Lénine à Staline*, p. 281.

[22] Humbert-Droz to Togliatti, letter of 8 April 1927, p. 5 (Humbert-Droz Archive). Other passages from this letter are cited in *De Lénine à Staline*, pp. 279–81, but not this one.

[23] This dispute at the Comintern's IX Plenum comes out most clearly in Togliatti's hitherto unpublished speech, partially available in the Tasca Archives (*Annali 1966*, pp. 441–44).

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tions to the American communists to set up their own miners' union in opposition to the existing United Mine Workers of America. The new communist mine union was formed in September of that year, soon to be followed by two others in textiles and the needle trades; the Trade Union Unity League, a full-fledged dual-union centre, replaced the formerly propagandistic Trade Union Educational League on 1 September 1929.[24] In Britain, new communist trade unions were formed for the Scottish miners in the spring of 1929.[25] The German Communists began to work on a *Roten Gewerkschafts-Opposition* (Red Trade-Union Opposition) in 1930, but it never really succeeded in entrenching itself before Hitler came to power.[26]

Thus 'class against class' and the 'united front from below' led to a split in the working class all along the line, from politics to trade unionism and everything else. The political or electoral split was Bukharinist; the total split was Stalinist.

The theory of social-fascism underwent a similar metamorphosis. Until 1928, as we have seen, Bukharin had limited himself to seeing in Social-Democracy a social-fascist 'tendency'. After Bukharin's downfall the following year, the Comintern's organs published articles putting forward the proposition that Social-Democracy was the specific form fascism was actually taking.[27] At the Comintern's Tenth Plenum in July 1929, the first without Bukharin, his successors produced the full Stalinist theory of social-fascism. The loyal Finnish servitor, Otto Kuusinen, said that the difference between fascists and social-fascists was that the latter used a 'smoke screen'. He offered the view that British Labourism could be thought of as social-fascism 'in the caterpillar stage' whereas German Social-Democracy was already in the 'butterfly stage'. Manuilsky, now the top Russian in the secretariat, stated that the German Social-Democratic party was already prepared by itself to establish an 'open bourgeois dictatorship'. Béla Kun, then the ranking Hungarian member in the Comintern hierarchy, speculated that social-fascism might be the typical form of fascism in the more advanced capitalist countries. In any event, he decided, any struggle between social-fascism and fascism was merely a struggle 'between two methods of fascization'. Lozovsky, who always tried harder, held forth against the idea, which he said was very widespread in communist circles, that the broad masses of Social-Democracy were less reactionary than their leaders. He insisted that the leaders, top, middle and bottom, and even some of the rank-and-file, with the exception of some insignificant groups, were going fascist.[28]

[24] I have told this story in greater detail in *American Communism and Soviet Russia* (New York: Viking, 1960), pp. 284–90, 380, 431, and in 'Communists and Miners, 1928–33', *Dissent*, Spring 1972.

[25] Macfarlane, op. cit. p. 247.

[26] Ossip K. Flechtheim, *Die KPD in der Weimarer Republik* (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, rev. ed., 1969), pp. 271–74.

[27] Wilhelm Koenen, *International Press Correspondence*, 8 March 1929, p. 227; 'Social-Fascism in Germany', *The Communist International*, May 1929, pp. 529–30.

[28] *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale*, 3–19 July 1929, pp. 39–40 (Kuusinen); 63 (Manuilsky); 191 (Kun); 390–91 (Lozovsky).

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This is not the place to rehearse the whole story of the social-fascist dementia that afflicted the communist movement for almost five years. Despite some tinkering with the formula, the fundamental premise was never given up—that Social-Democracy and not Hitlerism was the main enemy in Germany. The Comintern held on to this *idée fixe* for over a year after Hitler came to power.

Trotsky was not bemused by the social-fascist craze. Though he had called for a left turn as long ago as 1925, he did not believe in the identification of Social-Democracy with fascism. Not that Trotsky ever betrayed any sympathy or forbearance for Social-Democracy. But he held to the more traditional view that fascism and Social-Democracy were two different instrumentalities of bourgeois rule, the first used only at a moment of immediate revolutionary danger or state of civil war, the latter in periods of lull after a proletarian defeat or before a civil war. He ridiculed ' the senseless and oversimplified contention of the *identity* of the social democracy with fascism ' (italics in original). He insisted that ' the social democracy still leads millions of workers behind it and within certain limits is constrained to reckon not only with the will of its bourgeois master but also with the interests of its deluded proletarian constituency. But it is absolutely senseless to characterize the social democracy as the " moderate wing of fascism " '. In effect, Trotsky was ready to characterize Social-Democracy as the moderate or left wing of bourgeois society, but not as the moderate wing of fascism—a confusion which he considered to be theoretically witless and politically suicidal.

Trotsky's first reaction to the treatment of the relationship between fascism and Social-Democracy in the Bukharinist Draft Programme of May 1928 was somewhat mixed. He thought that it deliberately introduced ' ambiguities ' in order to tie up with past pronouncements on the subject; he conceded that it was ' far more rational and correct than the schema of Stalin ', which essentially went back to the theory worked out in 1924. It would appear that Trotsky recognised the difference between the partial, tentative Bukharinist reintroduction of the theme at the Sixth World Congress and Stalin's ' senseless and oversimplified ' version.[29]

The Sixth World Congress was both the end of the Comintern's Bukharinist phase and the beginning of the Stalinist era. On the key questions of stabilization and social-fascism, its answers were still far more Bukharinist than Stalinist. The Stalinist era came into its own only the following year at the Tenth Plenum which was completely controlled by Stalin's men. As soon as Bukharin was eliminated, Stalin proceeded to claim the congress and even its programme as wholly his own. The case of the programme shows to what extreme lengths Stalin was willing to go to appropriate other people's theoretical work. Bukharin was chairman of the commission which drafted the programme; he gave the report on it at the congress; it was so identified with him that one Russian member of the commission was quoted as

[29] *The Third International After Lenin*, op. cit. pp. 107–16.

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saying that the programme was not 'the best work that Comrade Bukharin has done'.[30] Humbert-Droz has described how Bukharin did most of the work for the editorial commission while the other members played billiards.[31] Nevertheless, an official Russian party history six years later solemnly asserted that 'the programme was worked out under the direct *guidance* and *participation* of Comrade Stalin' (italics in original).[32] The editors of Stalin's *Works* were constrained to record for posterity that 'J. V. Stalin was a member of the commission and directed the drafting of the programme'.[33] He was, indeed, a nominal member of the Programme Commission but, according to Humbert-Droz, attended only the opening session of the congress, left immediately thereafter to vacation in the Caucasus, and far from having directed the drafting of the programme, took no part in it. The closest he came to the work was through his minion, Molotov, who checked on Bukharin in the small editorial commission. The authoritative German edition of the proceedings of the Sixth World Congress has long been a bibliographical puzzle. Volumes 1, 3 and 4 were published as scheduled, but Volume 2 never seemed to show up even in the largest library collections.[34] Humbert-Droz has finally cleared up the mystery. The German Volume 2 was never published because it could hardly have hidden the fact that Bukharin and Humbert-Droz were the chief artisans of the programme, whereas the Russian party's history attributed it to Stalin 'who had not written an iota of it'.[35]

The fate of this programme was richly symbolic. Stalin was notoriously lacking in scruples about appropriating other people's ideas and then giving them a characteristic Stalinist twist which appalled those who had originated them. Stalin was not above overcoming his profound feeling of intellectual inferiority by pilfering from the common stock of Bolshevik ideas or by claiming someone else's intellectual property as his own. The more Stalin took from others, the more resentment he felt against them and the more determined were his efforts to conceal the traces of his debt to them. The Stalinism of this transitional period fed largely on pre-Stalinist materials, a circumstance which makes the line between them difficult and sometimes hazardous to draw. Yet there was such a line, though it was far from being a simple right-left division. Indeed, nothing about Bukharin was that simple.

30 A Czechoslovak delegate, Najdanov, quoted Ossinski to this effect (*International Press Correspondence*, 25 September 1928, p. 1191).

31 *De Lénine à Staline*, p. 313.

32 W. Knorin, ed., *Communist Party of the Soviet Union: A Short History* (English ed., 1935, p. 403).

33 Stalin, *Works*, Vol. XI, p. 380, note 40.

34 The bibliography of Witold S. Sworakowski notes of Volume 2 that 'this volume has not been located' (*The Communist International and Its Front Organizations*, Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1965, p. 187). Alas, it will never be located.

35 *De Lénine à Staline*, p. 314. But Humbert-Droz apparently did not know that Volume 3 of the six-volume Russian stenographic report contained the discussion on the programme.

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The cream of the 'jest' has turned up in France. After Humbert-Droz's first little book came out in 1964, the French communists realized that he had provided them with a scapegoat to blame for the 'third period' debacle in France. They had never blamed Stalin for their leftist excesses, but now they pointed an accusing finger at Humbert-Droz and Bukharin for having forced the 'class against class' line on them in the 1928 elections. A recent history of the Communist International by the veteran French communist, Georges Cogniot, has Maurice Thorez, the French party's top leader throughout the Stalinist era, vainly trying to resist these 'dogmatic tendencies'. Cogniot must have assumed that no one would ever check on his quotations; one of them seeks to give the impression that Thorez had frowned on the policy of 'social-fascism' as early as 1930.[36] Thus Bukharin, the terrible 'rightist', has become Bukharin, the terrible 'leftist'. The non-resisting French communists, whom Borkenau said had willingly obeyed Stalin, have become the *resisting French communists whom Cogniot says unwillingly obeyed* Bukharin.

Bukharin was a Bolshevik, before he was a 'rightist' or 'leftist'. Strangely, this needs to be said. There need be no surprise, then, that he took a relatively leftist course in the Comintern when he headed it; hostility to Social-Democracy was ingrained in all Bolsheviks; the only question was how far it should go or how it should be manifested in particular circumstances. This common source in basic Bolshevism provides the clue to what came between Bukharin and Stalin and what held them together to the end—Bukharin's end. A Bolshevik could denounce Social-Democracy in the strongest terms, encourage an electoral break with it and even go along with the idea that it was revealing a fascist 'tendency'. After all, Zinoviev had gone much further not so long ago, and no one had protested. But the crude notion that Social-Democracy was simply a form of fascism was too much for Bukharin to swallow. His admonition at the Sixth World Congress that 'it would be

[36] Georges Cogniot, *L'Internationale Communiste* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1969), pp. 100–01, 111. The same line may be found in an article by Victor Joannès in *Cahiers de l'Institut Maurice Thorez*, 4 année, No. 20, 4 trimestre 1970, p. 58. To show that France was one of those countries where 'dogmatic tendencies' were fought as early as 1930, Cogniot cites an article by Maurice Thorez which allegedly deplored 'l'emploi de formules et de clichés sur le *social-fascisme*' (p. 111, italics in original). These words made it appear that Thorez had opposed the policy of social-fascism. But the entire sentence by Thorez read: 'En outre l'emploi de formules et de clichés sur le "*social-fascisme*", sans que soit donnée une explication claire et populaire de chaque fait marquant la fascisation de la social-democratie, n'a pas permis de gagner les ouvriers et a nourri deux courants qui dévient de notre politique à l'égard du Parti socialiste' (*L'Internationale Communiste*, 20 July 1930, p. 1359). The passage, which was quite in accord with the Comintern's own line of the period, may also be found in *Oeuvres de Maurice Thorez* (Paris: Editions Sociales, 1950), Book II, Vol. 1, p. 50. In effect, Thorez wanted the communists to differentiate between the so-called social-fascist leaders and the Social-Democratic workers; his reference to 'formules et de clichés' was not meant to question the theory and practice of social-fascism, to which he faithfully adhered or he would not have kept his job, but to the best tactics for putting them across—'une explication claire et populaire de chaque fait marquant la fascisation de la social-démocratie'.

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a mistake to lump Social-Democracy and fascism together' undoubtedly represented his personal view. Yet it was very difficult for a Bolshevik to say a good word for Social-Democracy, even if he said no more than that it wasn't as bad as fascism. Tactically, the advantage was all with Stalin, and those few who demurred in any way did so with excessive caution lest they appear too tolerant of the hated Social-Democrats. It was more or less the same with respect to the differences over Soviet domestic policy that arose in 1928. The idea that Bukharin was opposed to collectivization or industrialization was a malicious myth. The argument was over methods and tempo. The Bolshevik tradition—and especially Lenin's last injunctions [37]—had never contemplated massacring millions of peasants and workers to bring about forced collectivization and all-out industrialization. But it was just as hard to defend peasants, especially those slightly better-off than the rest, as it was to exculpate Social-Democrats even from the extreme charge of being fascists in disguise. Far more appealing and humane than Stalin, Bukharin was one of those Bolsheviks who recognised that there were limits to what the party could or should do, but those limits were very vaguely defined in the Bolshevik tradition. With Stalin there were no limits, and he prevailed.

The case of Togliatti, then closely associated with Bukharin, is most instructive. In 1928, Togliatti more than anyone else made some effort to protest against the theoretical confusion of fascism and Social-Democracy. In 1929, he made his peace with the victorious Stalinists and adapted his views to their line on social-fascism and everything else. Not until 1934 did he begin to have qualms about the third-period line, and then he became one of the most ardent supporters of the Popular Front. In 1959, he published a *mea culpa*, explaining why the policy of social-fascism had been a most serious 'error'.[38] One is tempted to believe that Togliatti's later policies in post-war Italy owed something to his Bukharinist past.

IF we are ever to understand the communist movement, it will be necessary to see it as a whole, through its different stages, tendencies and tensions. A concentration or an interpretation based on one stage can only distort and shorten our vision. In the present stage, the best starting

[37] One of Lenin's last writings, 'On Cooperation', dated 6 January 1923, one year before his death, had stressed that internal economic affairs were henceforth to be settled peacefully and change arranged by 'cultural' means. The key passage reads: 'We must admit that a radical change has taken place in our whole outlook on socialism. This radical change lies in that formerly we placed, and had to place, the main weight of emphasis on the political struggle, on revolution, on winning power, etc. Now the weight of emphasis is changing and is being shifted to peaceful, organizational, "cultural" work. . . . If we . . . confine ourselves entirely to internal economic relations, the weight of emphasis in our work is certainly shifted to educational work' (*Selected Works*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1951, Vol. II, Part 2, p. 722). If Bukharin was a 'rightist' after 1923, it was because he was so impressed by Lenin's few but solemnly meditative writings in the first quarter of that year.

[38] Togliatti's fluctuations are well described in Spriano's *Storia del Partito comunista italiano*, Vol. II, Chapters XII and XVII.

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point is a fuller and better knowledge of the Comintern, for it was in the Comintern that all the tendencies and tensions made their first appearance and ran their course for a quarter of a century.[39] The period which I have chosen to look at more closely, culminating in the crucial turning point of 1928–29, shows how much work remains to be done. The communist movement is still unfinished business, and we do not know what its final stage is going to be. It may need to be restudied and reinterpreted more than once. We cannot as yet hope to tell the whole story, but we can do much better with the story as far as it has gone.

[39] Indeed, those old Comintern war-cries, 'class against class' and 'social-fascism', have staged an unexpected comeback in the past three years. 'Class against class' has been adopted by the French 'Maoists', whose organ, *l'Humanité Rouge*, 8 June 1972, ran the slogan as one of its main headlines (p. 3). In that same month, the author saw the same slogan painted on the wall of the Institut National d'Etude du Travail et d'Orientation, at the corner of the rue des Ursulines and rue Gay Lussac in Paris! As for 'social-fascism', it has been used by the Albanian communists against the Russian communists. The Albanian organ, *Zeri i Popullit*, 9 January 1969, condemned Soviet domestic and foreign policy in the following terms: 'Social-fascism in domestic policy has social-imperialism as its direct continuation in foreign policy, and while they seek to camouflage fascism with "socialist" phraseology, the Soviet leaders strive to conceal their imperialism with the slogans of "proletarian internationalism"' (*Radio Free Europe Research*, 14 January 1969, p. 3). In a different vein, Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski has twice prophesied that the Soviet system is more likely to go in the direction of 'social-fascism' than of social-democracy (*Survey*, Summer 1969, pp. 40–41, and *Die Zeit*, 3 October 1969).

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The Varga Controversy and the American CP

Philip J. Jaffe

WITH very few exceptions, and these only minor ones, the official communist parties in every part of the world have for more than half a century steadfastly followed a political line that invariably originated in Moscow. The American Party, however, carried a burden that was unique. Because it functioned in the most powerful nation in the world, it was early assigned a special role to play on the world political scene.

As early as 1929, Stalin said: 'The American Communist Party is one of the very few communist parties of the world that are entrusted by history with the tasks of decisive importance. . . .' However, despite a certain amount of superficial prestige it enjoyed in the years 1935 to 1945, it never became an important factor nor an integral part of the American scene and it never succeeded in playing the role assigned to it by Stalin. But whatever chance it ever had of achieving such a role was destroyed in the years 1947–48.

It all began with the publication of a book by the Hungarian economist, Eugene Varga, in 1946, and the violent attacks against it, particularly in 1947 and 1948. These did not end until his abject *mea culpas* in 1949 and 1952.

The 1947 and 1948 attacks on Varga came as manna from heaven—from Moscow—for the American Communist Party. These were exactly what it wanted to hear as assurance that having got rid of Earl Browder, it was now on the right track. The American Communist Party press, following faithfully the attacks against Varga, was replete with statements that depression, fascism and war in the USA were just around the corner. In this hysterical atmosphere, the dogma-ridden leaders of the American Communist Party let themselves go with breast-beating righteousness straight into disaster, jail and near oblivion. The Party today is not much more than a sect.

Although the Varga dispute had an almost fatal effect on the American Communist Party in the late forties, it is also an important source for understanding what Moscow believed was happening to world capitalism and particularly in the most advanced capitalist country, America. Although Varga was forced to denounce his own analysis of post-war capitalism while Stalin was alive, he later retracted his confessionals with a vengeance. And even after his death in 1964, the dispute about the nature of capitalism that began in 1947 continued.

For example: in the autumn of 1964, the Soviet economist, A. Manukyan, in an article in *World Economy and International Relations*, supported Varga's 1946 thesis about American capitalism. He even

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went further and predicted a continuing growth in the capitalist world for some years to come.

Again in the same journal, in October 1970, a series of papers were published that had been read at a conference of the Institute of World Economies and International Relations. Economist V. Lan attacked the theory that because the value of securities on the New York Stock Exchange had dropped very sharply, a capitalist depression was imminent. Lan also criticized the thesis that war preparations were responsible for the upswing of the American economy after 1937, and contended that American financial resources for combating recessions were extensive and did not depend necessarily on military expenditures. Professor Abram G. Mileykovsky, a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences, in a discussion period, criticized the common Soviet view that a high rate of economic growth is essential if a serious depression is to be avoided.

And again, in an article in the *New York Times* of 26 November 1970, Gyorgy Lukacs, the world-famous Hungarian Marxist philosopher, said:

> Present-day Marxists are still unable to give a scientifically adequate explanation of the failure of the capitalist economy's crisis to occur. . . . There are people even today who open the paper practically every day to see if the 'crisis' has been started in America and wait for the appropriate social action.

Eugene Varga

Although the story of the Varga dispute has lain dormant for more than two decades, the retelling of it with new material can add to our understanding not only of what is generally referred to as the 'Cold War', but to our understanding of the ideological struggle on the world economic front as well.

Yevgenii Samoylovich (Eugene) Varga was born in Hungary in 1879 and died in Moscow in 1964. Although he was an official of the short-lived Hungarian Communist government in 1919, he did not become a member of the Communist Party until he arrived in Moscow in 1920. There he was active in Comintern work and finally in 1927 became chief of the Institute of World Economy and World Politics and editor of the Institute's journal, *World Economy and World Politics.*

Beginning in 1924, Varga, over a period of many years, wrote dozens of books and hundreds of articles all of which could have carried the same title as his first book, *The Decline of Capitalism.* Even though Varga's writings were interlarded with such phrases as the 'Crisis in Social Democracy', the 'Growth of Fascism', etc., and were always concerned with the question of whether capitalism could or could not stabilize itself during a particular period of time, they did not represent examples of sound economic analysis. Moreover, Varga was almost never able to predict future economic developments correctly even though his reputation was largely based on his supposed ability to do

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so. In the Soviet Union he was not only the leading economist and intellectual hero, but from 1939 also a member of the Academy of Sciences.

However, Varga's downfall in 1949 came as a result of a book that he published in 1946 that was not only less dogmatic and less stereotyped than his previous writings but was iconoclastic from a rigid Marxist point of view. He began his fateful book, *Changes in the Economics of Capitalism as a Result of the Second World War*, in 1939 and completed it in 1945, during which time he published many chapters as articles.

Summary of Varga's book

According to Varga, the chief factor defining the industrial cycle after the end of the war would be the existence of a large surplus of basic capital in the United States (also in Canada and to some extent in England). For two or three years after the war, said Varga, 'deferred' demand of the American internal market of some 50 billion dollars would create the conditions for a post-war boom in the United States. By 1948, however, it would have exhausted its internal market, and, owing to a 'crisis of overproduction', would be forced to look beyond its shores for markets.

Europe, on the other hand, would not experience a post-war boom but instead would suffer 'impoverishment' and then a 'crisis of underproduction'. These two crises—overproduction in the United States and underproduction in Europe—would merge in 1948 to create 'one world economic crisis' which would last longer than that of 1920–21 or for approximately 10 years.

Although Varga stated that Europe's period of reconstruction would take approximately 10 years, the tempo of this reconstruction and the time it would take for Europe to overcome its crisis of underproduction would depend first of all on the export of American capital to Europe. Varga suggested that this would not only be necessary but desirable for the United States (an implied prediction of the Marshall Plan?). From his argument, it was understood that such export of American capital was also necessary and desirable for Europe. But this he did not state explicitly and even denied it later in denouncing American hegemony over Europe.

After the crisis had been overcome and after an at least partial stabilization of the European monetary situation, Varga continued, a completely new industrial cycle would begin. At this time the 'transitory' changes in capitalism brought about by the war would be ended and the 'permanent' changes would be revealed. This new cycle would resemble the one of 1929–37 with its 'depression of a special kind' (Stalin's phrase). In addition, after this 10-year period, the world agrarian crisis would also be revealed.

Another of Varga's main conclusions was that the problem of foreign markets disappeared during the war and with it the main

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contradiction of capitalism—the struggle for markets. Moreover, for at least a decade after the war Europe would not be in a position to compete with the United States for markets, thus eliminating the danger of war between capitalist countries.

Concerning the so-called 'people's democracies', Varga wrote that in these Eastern European countries 'state capitalism' still prevailed and that he still considered these countries to be part of the capitalist economy. In addition, he suggested that these countries were small and relatively unimportant, and that the fact of their changed status would not significantly change the general perspectives of the development of capitalism as a whole.

Perhaps the most important of Varga's conclusions and the most open to attack by his associates was his description of the newly acquired power of the state over the big bourgeoisie. In conducting the war, Varga argued, the state was compelled to subordinate the private interests of all bourgeois enterprises in the interest of conducting the war. Varga furthermore suggested that the bourgeois state to some degree began 'planning' its economy during the war. Consequently, the bourgeois state acquired a decisive role in the direction of the economy in all capitalist countries, both warring and neutral, but particularly in the United States and Great Britain. And Varga continued with the conclusion that this newly acquired state power would continue after the war.

Finally, Varga paid almost no attention to the class struggle during the war nor after its conclusion, concentrating more on the increasing population problem that would put pressure on capitalist countries. This 'failure' can be accounted for, perhaps, by Varga's decision to concentrate only on economic changes in this first volume while leaving the analysis of political questions for a second volume.

Criticism of Varga in 1947 [1]

Although some scattered mild criticism of Varga's book occurred as early as January 1945, it was not until the three sessions held in Moscow on 7, 14 and 21 May 1947 that his book was criticized officially in a joint conference of the political economy section of the Economics Institute and the political economy faculty of Moscow University. The conference was attended by a large number of people including scientific workers and teachers in the higher advanced institutes of Moscow. More than 20 persons participated in these discussions, including Academicians S. G. Strumlin and I. A. Trakhtenberg, and corresponding members of the Academy of Sciences, K. V. Ostrovityanov, M. N. Smit, M. A. Arzhanov; Professors P. A. Khromov, V. E. Motylyov,

[1] *Soviet Views on the Post-War World Economy. An Official Critique of Eugene Varga's 'Changes in the Economy of Capitalism Resulting from the Second World War'*, published by Public Affairs Press, Washington, D.C. (1948). Translated by Leo Gruliow.

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A. I. Kats, I. N. Dvorkin, A. N. Shneerson, P. K. Figurnov, M. A. Rubinstein, L. A. Mendelson and others.

The discussions were opened by Ostrovityanov in a calm and almost friendly spirit. Varga was allowed to speak soon after the opening of the discussions and he stated categorically his refusal to recant and indulge in self-criticism. His only retraction concerned his remarks on the 'new democracies'. At the end of the three days of discussions, his position remained unaltered.

Moreover, Varga restated even more emphatically some of his conclusions that his critics found most objectionable. For example, he repeated and extended his argument concerning the assumption of power by the state in wartime, power that it did not have in pre-war times. Worse still, Varga equated post-war 'nationalization' in England and France with that taking place in the 'new democracies', and suggested that in both cases the state was strengthened in a similar manner. He specifically said that 'the state had to plan' during the war and that the idea that only Socialist-Communist countries could plan was erroneous.

Finally, Varga left himself open to charges of 'objectivism' when he stated that: 'Of course, Comrades, it [his book] had few quotations from the classics. I hold that theoretical generalization consists in studying new facts and attempting to generalize them by the method of Marxism-Leninism . . . The world changes and the content of our work must also change.'

The major criticism of Varga's book was made by Motylyov. His main points were: (1) that Varga presented a completely erroneous view of the perspective of capitalism that was not only factually but also theoretically fallacious; and that in reality the second world war was a stage in the general crisis of capitalism and that it deepened this crisis; and (2) that Varga erroneously and artificially separated economics from politics in the epoch of imperialism and 'decaying, dying capitalism'. According to Motylyov, most of Varga's mistakes stemmed from these two methodological fallacies.

Motylyov continued with the contention that with the appearance of the 'new democracies', one could speak of an 'advanced Europe' and a 'backward America'. Varga's assertion that Europe's reconstruction would require a 10-year period disparaged any idea of an 'advanced Europe'. Motylyov said that France was already reaching the pre-war level of her economy but that Poland would surpass that level in three years with the other 'new democracies' to follow close behind.

Motylyov also disputed with Varga on the question of state intervention and planned economy under capitalism, holding that it was the same in the war as in peacetime and that monopolies were used as before the war as a weapon for economic expansion by the state. He continued his attack not only against Varga but also against Varga's Institute suggesting that his 'techno-economic' approach had caused other members of his Institute to lose sight of the role of monopolies and even of the working class.

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Other participants like Shneerson, Dvorkin, Kats, etc., backed up Motylyov's criticisms with only minor variations. But it was left to Ostrovityanov to give a final summary of the three days of discussions. Although Ostrovityanov began softly by saying that Comrade Varga was not on trial and was not a defendant, he quickly came to the point that the major criticism of Varga's book was his disregard of the struggle between the two systems: 'Varga has not tried to approach the analysis of the phenomenon of contemporary capitalism from the point of view of the Stalinist presentation of the problem of the general crisis of capitalism and he abstracted himself from politics in analyzing economic phenomena.' He continued:

> In the article 'Characteristics of the Internal and Foreign Policies of Capitalist Countries in the Epoch of the General Crisis of Capitalism' published in the journal *World Economy and World Politics*, No. 6, 1946, Comrade Varga asserts that the struggle between the two systems was halted during the war . . . Varga reveals a clear underestimation of the struggle between the two systems as a determinant characteristic of the general crisis of capitalism.

And he concluded:

> . . . the bourgeois state cannot overcome crises . . . in the war period the one-sided development of the economy, the immeasurably worsened situation of the toiling masses creates the prerequisites for still sharper crises which must arise after the war's end . . . monopoly capital holds in its hands the apparatus of state power and utilizes it in its own private-ownership interests. This point is decisive in characterizing the state's role in the period of monopoly capitalism both in peacetime and in wartime.

As a result of the 1947 conference on Varga's book, Varga's Institute of World Economy and World Politics, by a decree of the Soviet Communist Party and the government, was merged with the old Economics Institute into a new Economics Institute which was placed under the guidance of the State Planning Commission. Varga's journal, *World Economics and World Politics*, was discontinued. Thus he was left with no official outlets under his control.

The American Communist Party in 1946–47

If Varga, according to his critics, underestimated the general crisis of capitalism and separated economics from politics, this could certainly not be said for William Z. Foster. Foster, one of the two leading figures in the American Communist Party and the man chiefly responsible for the expulsion of Earl Browder in 1946, had an uncanny intuition about changes in the Soviet Party line. He also clearly understood the ultimate purposes of the Soviet-German Pact of 1939, namely, to let the capitalistic world destroy itself through internecine war. In 1940, during the period of the Soviet-German Pact, he was writing about 'the war aims of

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American imperialism' and saying that 'the present imperialist war is a high stage in the rapidly developing general crisis of the world capitalist system caused by the sharpening inherent contradictions of capitalism'. In such articles as 'American Fascism Speaks Out', he linked the United States and the Allied countries to Germany and Italy—all were vying for control of the world capitalist system.

Only after Hitler invaded the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941 did Foster let up in his criticism of Roosevelt and America, but as soon as it was clear that the Soviet Union was out of danger, he again began speaking and writing about the danger of a 'rampant American imperialism'.

Also, in 1944, he criticized Browder, long before his expulsion, for not seeing 'the deepening of the crisis of world capitalism caused by the war', and for suffering the illusion that 'capitalism had somehow been rejuvenated and is now entering a new period of expansion and growth'. In these and many other instances, Foster gave a critique of the Varga thesis before it even appeared, and placed Browder squarely in the Varga camp. Thus his thinking converged with Moscow's post-war policy.

In *Political Affairs* for June 1945, Foster was already writing about 'The Danger of American Imperialism in the Post-war Period', which he closely tied to the danger of war and fascism. In September 1945, after Browder was removed as General Secretary, Foster, in a speech at Madison Square Garden to celebrate the Party's 26th anniversary, berated America's 'reactionary monopolists' who were 'heading the world toward a fresh debacle of economic chaos, fascism and war'. The task of American communists was to create the circumstances whereby the 'democratic forces' might 'pull the teeth of American reaction'. But by this time, it is possible that Foster was aware of the Varga debate which began even before Varga's book was published.

Early in 1946, American communist leaders introduced into their speeches and writings a sense of urgency about the approaching catastrophe—war between the United States and the Soviet Union. From mid-1945 and throughout the first half of 1946 they saw this looming war danger as a distinct possibility. Eugene Dennis, by then the new General Secretary of the American Communist Party, said at the Party's National Committee Meeting in February 1946, 'we are in a race with time [and] must act with despatch to win, to secure the peace'.

In July 1946, Foster began by stating that however changed the world situation, 'reactionary manifestations were now more pronounced than they had been in 1919'. Moreover, he suggested that American policies were threatening to produce 'an economic breakdown that will arrive more quickly and have more disastrous consequences than the one which followed the first world war'. Also, at the July 1946 session of the National Committee, Dennis stressed the 'maturing economic crisis' and 'the enormously accentuated danger of fascism'.

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In addition to their apocalyptic view of a new war, the American communists adopted a similar tone concerning the future course of the economy. The chief theoretician was Alexander Bittelman. In *Political Affairs* for January 1946, he predicted:

> . . . an economic catastrophe, within the next three to five years, the likes of which we have never seen before . . . it is generally agreed that the next cyclical economic crisis is about to break out some time between 1948 and 1950. The only question is: if the monopolists have their way in the next three years in domestic and in foreign policy—as they are having it virtually now—then the economic crisis will break nearer to 1948 than to 1950, and will assume a depth and proportion which will dwarf the economic catastrophe of 1929–33.

By November of 1946, Bittelman, writing again in *Political Affairs*, saw a 'storm signal' in the fall of the Stock Market values and his warnings became more specific and urgent:

> We must expect a more rapid tempo in the maturing of the economic crisis. Without projecting any definite time forecasts, but merely by way of orientation, it is possible to say that we shall continue to have a rising curve for the next six months to one year, immediately followed by the outbreak of a crisis. The question is: will it be a crisis of the type of 1921 or 1929, or some other type in scale and severity?

Dennis, writing in *Political Affairs* for January 1947, became even more specific:

> In so far as 1947 is concerned, this much is already certain; there will be an economic recession that will take place whether in late spring or summer. This may be followed by a short period, lasting six to nine months, of a levelling off, so to speak, or it may be followed by a precipitate drop in production and employment, by the development of a full-blown cyclical crisis.

The attack on Varga reached everywhere. The *Daily Worker* on 1 March 1947 reported on the conference of the British Communist Party and quoted Harry Pollitt as saying that 'the United States, while boasting and glorifying her free enterprise, is heading for an economic crisis which will break out either at the end of this year or the beginning of 1948'.

In point of fact, the first mild post-war recession did begin in November 1948 and lasted only until about October 1949, but it was hardly what could by any stretch of the imagination be considered an economic crisis. Another mild recession lasting about 13 months occurred from July 1953 to August 1954. But the simple fact is that none of the capitalist countries has suffered a real depression since the second world war.

It is interesting to note in this connexion that the American Communist Party accepted so completely the official Moscow belief

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in the imminent American depression that it gambled heavily in the market. Continually selling short, it lost a sizable sum of money. Although I was not privy to the exact amount of the losses, word had it that it was in excess of a quarter of a million dollars. My knowledge of this derived from personal experience because I was invited by a leading communist and friend to sell short and make a killing. This took place in a leading broker's office, where the chief and his assistant, the latter a friend of mine, were both Party members. They were dismayed at my refusal.

Criticism of Varga in 1948

Criticism[2] of Varga in 1947 apparently failed to eradicate his un-Marxist views of capitalism. Thus in October 1948, an augmented session of the Learned Council of the Economics Institute of the Academy of Sciences, with the participation of scholars, educators and representatives of government ministries, convened to discuss the shortcomings and tasks of the Economics Institute for the coming year, 1949.

This conference, as will be seen, was of a very different qualitative character from the one in 1947, a change that followed a series of momentous events that occurred in the intervening year and a half.

Continuation of the Greek Civil War: Early in 1942 in Greece, the great communist underground network EAM built a guerrilla army, ELAS, and had considerable early success including the defeat of the British-supported Zervas resistance group. In 1944, British troops landed in Greece and held off civil war until 1946 when ELAS, under the command of General Vafiades, began a new offensive with support from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania, but chiefly from Yugoslavia. As a result of expulsion from the Cominform in 1948, Yugoslavia feared a Soviet-led invasion. Consequently, support for the Greek communists was shut off and the Civil War came to an end in 1949.

The Truman Doctrine: A policy was expounded by President Truman on 12 March 1947, when he proclaimed that the United States ought 'to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure'. In response to this speech before Congress, $400 million was allocated as immediate aid to Greece and Turkey.

The Marshall Plan: In a speech by US Secretary of State, George Marshall, delivered at Harvard on 5 June 1947, he said in part,

> It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. . . . Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political

[2] 'Shortcomings and Tasks in Economic Research', published in various issues of *Current Digest of Soviet Press*, beginning early in 1949 and continuing.

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> and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. . . . The programme should be a joint one, agreed to by a number of, if not all, European nations.

Of course, the heart of the proposal was the promise of American aid. On 27 June, the Foreign Ministers of France, Great Britain and the USSR met to discuss the offer, which the USSR and all other communist countries rejected. Poland was anxious to accept, but finally rejected. Czechoslovakia at first accepted and then through Soviet pressure withdrew its acceptance. On 22 September 1947, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation was set up to administer the programme.

The Anglo–American–Soviet dispute about Poland and the Yalta Agreement: A violent dispute arose between the United States and Great Britain on the one side and the Soviet Union on the other resulting from the latter's refusal to hold free elections in Poland in January 1947. There was a reported atmosphere of secret police terror which was responsible for the victory of the pro-communist 'Polish Provisional Government of National Unity'.

The beginning of the Chinese Communist counter-attack against Chiang Kai-shek: Against Stalin's advice and in spite of his refusal to help, the Chinese communists began in 1947 their counter-offensive against the Kuomintang under Chiang Kai-shek.

The organization of the Cominform in September 1947 and its significance: It was in this conference that Kardelj and Djilas of Yugoslavia led a violent attack on the French and Italian Communist Parties for not having taken the initiative—for not having taken advantage of the world situation in 1946 to seize power. But it was in Zhdanov's major speech that the tone was set not only for this first organizational meeting of the Cominform, but for the future of the communist world and of course the American Communist Party. Zhdanov was second only to Stalin in the ideological hierarchy of the Soviet Party, thus it was natural that he should present the official Stalinist position in his speech on 'The International Situation':

> The military defeat of the bloc of fascist states . . . sharply altered the alignment of forces between the two systems—the Socialist and the capitalist—in favour of Socialism . . . a number of countries in Central and South Eastern Europe are dropping out of the imperialist system . . . the United States proclaimed a new frankly predatory and expansionist course. The purpose of this frankly expansionist course is to establish the world supremacy of American imperialism . . . the division of the political forces in operation in the international arena into two major camps: the imperialist and the anti-democratic, on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other. The principal driving force of the imperialist camp is the USA . . . the imperialist camp is prepared . . . to support its former adversaries in the war against its wartime allies.

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The Czechoslovak coup in February 1948: As in Poland in January 1947, Czechoslovakia became, through a coup, a People's Democracy on 25 February 1948. With this last move, Eastern Europe fell completely under Soviet domination.

The expulsion of Tito and Yugoslavia from the Cominform in June 1948: This is the story of Tito's successful refusal to become a vassal of the USSR.

Earl Browder's removal as Secretary of the American Communist Party: Last, but by no means least, was Earl Browder's expulsion from the Party in 1946. This was necessary in order to keep all communist parties in line for the 'showdown' that Stalin believed was coming.

With the above briefly described world-shaking events from 1946 to 1948, it should be easy to predict the direction that the new attack on Varga would take. As in May 1947, Ostrovityanov opened the 1948 Conference, but this time on a sharply different note. He now stressed the 'Leninist-Stalinist theory of imperialism' (and capitalism) as the 'basis of the Leninist-Stalinist theory of economy'. With this new stress on orthodoxy came an increased attack against 'objectivism':

> The Leninist-Stalinist theory of imperialism is the irreplaceable weapon in the struggle of the democratic forces headed by the USSR against reactionary imperialist forces. . . . The sharpening of the general crisis of capitalism after the second world war and the interests of the struggle of the democratic camp demand further creative development of the theory of imperialism and the general crisis of capitalism.

Varga's book and the writings of many of his Institute's former members were singled out for special criticism. According to Ostrovityanov, 'reformist ideas found a nest for themselves in the former Institute of World Economy and World Politics [and] Comrade Varga . . . headed this un-Marxist trend'. The following errors were cited:

> . . . criticism [in the Soviet press] revealed errors of a reformist nature in these books. These errors lie in ignoring and distorting the Leninist-Stalinist theory of imperialism and the general crisis of capitalism; in glossing over the class contradictions of contemporary capitalism; in ignoring the struggle between the two systems; in un-Marxist assertions concerning the decisive role of the bourgeois state in the development of the economy and concerning the possibility of planning in capitalist countries; in an apolitical attitude; in the . . . techno-economic approach to the treatment of the economy of foreign countries; in bourgeois objectivism; in an uncritical attitude toward bourgeois data; and in admiration of bourgeois science and technique.

Following Ostrovityanov, most of the former members of Varga's Institute indulged in self-criticism and in criticism of Varga. The former assistant director of the Institute, V. A. Maslenikov, summed up the new official and orthodox position in the following words:

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> The fundamental symptoms of the general crisis of capitalism are, first, the division of the world into two systems, the growth of the contradictions and of the struggle between them; second, the sharpening of the contradictions between labour and capital; third, the intensification of the contradictions between the mother countries and the colonies; and finally, the deepening of the inter-imperialist contradictions.

He also stated that Varga 'impelled staff members of the former Institute of World Economy and World Politics toward empiricism, toward departure from a study of class contradictions and the class struggle'.

Varga was allowed to speak. Now he said only that he had expected an earlier outbreak of the crisis of overproduction in America, which he said was being drawn out. But he specifically mentioned the factors mitigating against another war. This is as far as he would go: 'I cannot follow the advice and admit all the criticisms of my book to be correct.'

Reasserting that 'the fundamental thing' to remember in any attempt to understand contemporary capitalism is 'the struggle between the two systems', Ostrovityanov pointed to Varga's thesis on the temporary suspension of the basic contradictions of capitalism as 'the theoretical foundation' for Varga's reformist conceptions. Said Ostrovityanov:

> . . . Comrade Varga, as a consequence of the non-Party position which he took in the question of the criticism of his errors, did not set out to overcome and correct them, but multiplied them with each new article, with each new speech. This applies also to his speech at the present meeting. Comrade Varga committed new errors. . . . This confirms my conclusion that no usefulness will emerge from Comrade Varga's future work if he continues obstinately to defend his reformist errors.

Ostrovityanov demanded that Varga repent of his reformist errors and warned him against his refusal to do so: '*From the history of our Party, you should know to what sad consequences stubborn insistence on one's errors leads*' (author's italics). But Varga still did not recant. It took yet another discussion to bring that about.

Varga's first mea culpa

Ostrovityanov, in his introductory remarks to the 1948 discussion, mentioned preparations for a discussion 'On the Conditions of the Ripening of Economic Depression in the USA'. Such a discussion, still in 1948, was held at a meeting of the Academic Council of the Economics Institute. Varga, of course, was again the chief target. His new crime was 'cosmopolitanism':

> Cosmopolitanism is the poisoned weapon of American imperialism striving to annihilate the independence of peoples and for world hegemony. Cosmopolitans are deserters from the people without love for the Motherland, indifferent to its interests and fate, cring-

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> ing to the bourgeois West, with no feeling of pride in their own country. The Soviet people despises and hates homeless cosmopolitans. The weeds of cosmopolitanism . . . are not yet completely eradicated from our economic writings.

It was at this session that Varga finally recanted. In an article by Varga in *Problems of Economics* (No. 3, 1949), under the title, 'Against Reformist Tendencies in Works on Imperialism', he criticized not only himself but his whole Institute:

> As is well known, my book, *Changes in the Economy of Capitalism Resulting from the Second World War*, as well as a whole series of other works of the former Institute of World Economy and World Politics published after the war and for which I bear responsibility as head of this Institute, was subjected to severe criticism both in the Party Press and in scientific discussions. This criticism was necessary and correct. My mistake lies in that I did not immediately recognize the correctness of the criticism as my other comrades did. But better late than never.

Varga tied his 'reformism' to 'cosmopolitanism':

> . . . these mistakes constituted a whole series of mistakes of a reformist trend which in their sum total denote a definite departure from the Leninist-Stalinist appraisal of present-day imperialism. . . . It goes without saying that mistakes of a reformist trend denote also mistakes of a cosmopolitan tendency, because they embellish capitalism. . . . Every reformist mistake, every encroachment on the purity of Marxist-Leninist teachings, is particularly dangerous in the present historical circumstances.

Point by point, Varga recanted on all of the criticisms levelled against him in earlier discussions. At the end, he declared that '. . . instead of planning a second part to my former work, a new one should be written, an independent book on the post-war economic and political problems of imperialism without reformist mistakes which were committed by me. . . ."

The American Communist Party in 1948–49

Once again it is necessary to interrupt the Varga dispute with an assessment of what effect the 1948 attack on him had on the American Communist Party.

On 7 November 1947, O. John Rogge, former Assistant Attorney General, announced that the Department of Justice was planning a 'dramatic round-up of dozens of communist leaders and alleged fellow travellers'.

This suggested to the American Communist Party leaders that they would no longer be able to function as they had. It sounded to them like the beginning of American fascism. To meet such an eventuality, preparations to go underground were made late in 1947. This became an especially acute problem with the arrest in 1948 under the

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provisions of the Smith Act of 12 of the leading members of the Party. By 1950, soon after they were convicted, at least half of the Party apparatus was organized to function as an underground movement similar to that which functioned in Tsarist Russia.

Moreover, soon after Rogge's announcement, the Party finally came out openly for endorsement and support of a third party. At the beginning of the meeting of the National Committee, held from 3 to 5 February 1948 (after Henry Wallace's decision to run), Dennis said that if a Progressive Party developed, 'we communists will seek to affiliate with it'. The reasoning here was simple. Not only could the communists continue to function without harassment after a Progressive Party large vote, but they would also be provided with a kind of 'cover' or 'umbrella'.

The problem of supporting a third party was not, however, so easy to resolve. The American Communist Party had already designated the Republican Party as 'the main vehicle and centre of reaction and fascism', and announced that a Republican victory would heighten the danger of war. Max Weiss, as early as November 1946, in *Political Affairs*, wrote that 'if these forces [the Republican Party] are not identified, isolated and defeated, and if they are allowed to come to power in our country, then the present talk of war will soon be converted into an actual danger of war'. This immediately posed the problem of the Party's relation to the Democrats. Should they not support the Democrats to prevent a Republican victory? But such an action conflicted with their already existing thesis that the Truman administration was in fact yielding to the Republicans on the question of American imperialism. This was the dilemma which was not resolved until after the founding of the Cominform in September 1947. The communists had been hedging on the possibility or advisability of a third party, as did Wallace himself, thinking it wiser and more politically feasible to try to reform and change the Democratic Party. But, after the Zhdanov speech at the Cominform conference (published in *Pravda* on 22 October 1947), the need for a third party became more urgent than ever because it looked as if the world movement had again found its direction and the communists could proceed from strength in forming their own coalition. At the Party's 14th National Convention in August 1948, Foster stated that the Cominform conference had: 'affirmed the correctness of our lines, especially on the all-important question of the role of American imperialism and the danger of war and fascism connected with it.'

Rogge's announcement, Andrei Zhdanov's speech on the International Situation in September 1947 in which he divided the world into 'two main camps', and the extremely violent attacks against Varga in 1948 all contributed to the American communist leaders' decision not only to go ahead with a third party, but also to fight what they termed American reaction with all the weapons at their command, a decision that led to ideological adventurism and to a series of disasters.

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The story of the Wallace campaign in 1948 has been told many times, and there is no need to repeat the tragic details of his ignominious defeat in the election. But what were Wallace's reasons for accepting the leadership of the third party, which was supported openly by the communists? And was he sincere? These questions remain to be answered.

Wallace's simulated hesitations about whether to be pleased or displeased with communist support did not fool those in the know. He knew well that communists ran his election campaign. He knew well that Lee Pressman and company were his campaign bosses. Having never got over the disappointment of being passed over for the vice-presidential nomination in favour of Truman, and having been removed by President Truman from his cabinet post as Secretary of Commerce, his chief and primary aim in the election was to defeat Truman. Wallace failed to clarify his position on certain issues because he had no alternative positions that differed from Truman's. Perhaps the outstanding example of this was that he steadfastly refused to make a speech on agriculture, which was his own province, until the last week of the campaign when it went unnoticed because his position differed little if at all from Truman's.

Two personal recollections might help to widen our perspective on the sardonic character of the Wallace campaign. In 1947 I published my criticism of the proposed Progressive Party. I supported Truman and argued this position with a close friend of mine who was then a top communist, even though only a year away from his own excommunication. Our debates were as endless as they were repetitious. But the morning after the election, in which Wallace was resoundingly defeated, he visted me at my home and said, with no little excitement, 'Wasn't the election wonderful?' To which I replied, also with no little excitement, 'You s.o.b., your communist head was for Wallace but your heart was against Dewey. . . . .'

Then I recall that on the evening of election day I was at the home of another friend together with a number of artists, writers and members of the *Daily Worker* staff. All present knew what my position was, but were nonetheless somewhat startled when I said that Wallace would not get more than one and a quarter million votes. In left-wing circles, it was generally believed that Wallace would get somewhere between five and ten million votes. My host thereupon said to me that if I proved to be right in my prediction, he would be forced to accept all of my previous arguments against the advisability of a third party. Wallace, of course, received just slightly more than a million votes and most of these came from the New York area. The result for me personally was that not a single person who had been at the said gathering the night before, including my host and friend, ever spoke to me again nor to this day have they ever deigned to recognize me on the street. This perhaps says as much about those who supported Wallace as it does about Wallace himself.

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Varga's second mea culpa

The first of Varga's *mea culpas* did not entirely end the furores that his 1945 work engendered. In Stalin's book, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.* (1952), it is apparent that Stalin was still bothered by sympathies that existed among some for Varga's original position. The following, for example, was clearly directed against Varga:

> Some comrades hold that, owing to the development of new international conditions since the second world war, wars between capitalist countries have ceased to be inevitable. They consider that the contradictions between the socialist camp and the capitalist camp are more acute than the contradictions among the capitalist countries; that the USA has brought the other capitalist countries sufficiently under its sway to be able to prevent them going to war among themselves and weakening one another . . . these comrades are mistaken. . . . It is said that Lenin's thesis that imperialism inevitably generates war must now be regarded as obsolete, since powerful forces have come forward today in defence of peace and against another world war. . . . That is not true.[3]

As a consequence of Stalin's new pronouncements, Varga, in November 1952, appeared before an augmented meeting of the Learned Council of the Institute of Economics to reacknowledge his errors in the light of Stalin's 'new work of genius'. This reacknowledgment was published in *Problems of Economics* (No. 12, December 1952). Also in 1953, in the revised edition of his book, Varga accepted Stalin's formulations on the post-second world war capitalist crisis and his conclusion that it would be comparable to that following the first world war.

The position that Stalin and the Soviet Union returned to at the end of the second world war and which Stalin reiterated in his 1952 book, was essentially the position that he had outlined in his report to the 17th Congress of the CPSU (B.) on the work of the Central Committee on 26 January 1934.

Zhdanov, in his speeches in the late 1940s, often refers to Stalin's 1934 speech as if the world stood still—as if there were no difference between the first and second world wars. To begin with, Stalin, in 1934, emphasized the 'continuing world economic crisis':

> . . . not only in industry but in agriculture as a whole . . . the industrial crisis has become interwoven with the agrarian crisis which has affected all the agrarian and semi-agrarian countries without exception, and this could not but make the industrial crisis more complicated and more profound . . . the industrial crisis broke out in the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, when capitalism no longer has, nor can have . . . the strength and stability it had before the war and the October Revolution. . . .

[3] Even after the end of the second world war, in February 1946, Stalin held that wars between capitalist countries were inevitable.

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This was apparently the analysis that Varga meant when he accepted Stalin's formulations on the general crisis of capitalism.

Varga repays old debts

From the attacks against him in 1947–48 until Stalin's death in 1953, Varga's economic labours were limited to working on Hungary's problems. However, under Khrushchev, he was not only rehabilitated, but in 1954 even received the Order of Lenin. And then in the rising tide of anti-Stalinism that began in 1956, Varga published a most amazing book that was a clear criticism of Stalin for his shallow and often erroneous Marxism.

Although Varga's new book, *Politico-Economic Problems of Capitalism*, was not published until 1964, he states in his preface, dated Moscow 1963, the year before he died, that the essays collected in this book were written over a period of many years. Both this first edition in 1964 and the second in 1965 were sold out in record time and created wide discussion. The first and only English edition was published in 1968.

Varga enjoyed the opportunity of paying back old debts when he wrote that his new book was 'written polemically' and was:

> . . . directed against thoughtless dogmatism, which until recently was widespread in works on the economy and politics of capitalism. Dogmatism substitutes ready conclusions which Marx drew as a result of his studies in definite historical conditions for the Marxist method of research. It also means that dogmatists proceed from the assumption that not only are Marx's general laws governing capitalist development valid to this very day, but that all the facts must be identical to those obtained during Marx's and Lenin's lifetime. From here dogmatists are but a step away from adjusting the facts to individual conclusions of Marxism, ignoring new facts which fit badly in their schemes instead of analyzing new phenomena typical of modern capitalism. Dogmatists attempt to prove the immutability of all of Marx's propositions using isolated and untypical facts.

The following are some examples of the openly anti-Stalin character of Varga's book:

> The law of the revolutionary transition from one social system to the other: Stalin formulated this Marxist law in a new way: '. . . the economic law that the relations of production must necessarily conform with the character of the productive forces.' It is in this form that the law appears in subsequently published textbooks. Some flatterers even called it a major theoretical contribution to Marxist theory. In our opinion, Stalin's formula is nothing but a poorer version of Marx's original formula, for it slurs over the historical and revolutionary content of the law formulated by Marx. . . . When Stalin declared that the basic economic law 'demands' certain things, he committed a strange error for a Marxist. An objective law is a reflection of events

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comprising the essence of things: a reflection cannot 'demand'. . . . Stalin's basic economic law of modern capitalism speaks only of the '. . . exploitation, ruin and impoverishment . . . of the population', but does not mention the revolutionization of the masses by capitalism, which has always been the essence of all statements of Marxist-Leninist classics on this subject. His formulation is extremely inaccurate.

Whether under monopoly capitalism the state is a state of the whole bourgeoisie, as I stated in my book, or a state solely of the monopoly bourgeoisie (financial oligarchy), as was asserted by my opponents, I now find that depending on the concrete historical circumstances, either of these may be correct. . . . Under normal conditions, i.e. when the capitalist social system is not subjugated to any immediate danger, the monopoly capitalist state is a state of the monopoly bourgeoisie. . . . The state acts on behalf of the interests of the whole bourgeoisie at times when the existence of the capitalist social system is in direct danger. . . . In my book I said that 'the state has become the decisive factor in the war economy' . . . many facts endorse this statement . . . the objection was that 'it is not the state but the monopolies who are the decisive force in the war economy.' This objection is a simple logical mistake, a 'confusion of conceptions'. The class character of the state and its economic role are entirely different things and must not be confused. . . .

Finally, let us turn to the problem of economic planning by the capitalist state. The discussion of this problem too was marked by a dogmatic approach and lack of a concrete historical analysis . . . even in times of peace, a number of bourgeois states have adopted 'five-year plans'. India, for example. . . . It cannot be denied that the six Common Market countries have 'planned' their economic policy for a period of twelve years in advance, and are to some extent still fulfilling this plan. . . . The above shows that the dogmatic assertion that there can be only two alternatives—complete anarchy of production or complete planned economy—is impractical, untrue and hence anti-Marxist.

Though I have not made a special study of Soviet economy, and well realize the narrow limits of my experience in this matter, I should like to point out that even in the Soviet Union, after decades of genuine planned economy, there are still elements of anarchy in production, and planning does not as yet fully embrace all aspects of the economy.

In this 350-page book there are of course many other subjects discussed, such as 'the problem of absolute impoverishment', 'the problem of agrarian crises', and 'the problem of the Asiatic mode of production', that require serious attention too lengthy for continued analysis in this essay. But one more point must be mentioned if only because it is a somewhat curious attack on the American, Earl Browder. Varga begins his chapter on the 'absolute impoverishment' of the working class with an attack on the 'apologists of capitalism', Browder included, who argue that there is no absolute impoverishment, a point

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which he goes on to make himself. The catch is that he suggests that while there is no law of absolute impoverishment working in the advanced capitalist countries, the law still applies to underdeveloped and even non-capitalist countries:

> The apologists of capitalism, Right-wing Social Democrats and a few renegades like Browder declare that there is no absolute impoverishment. This is obviously wrong, for there have always been countries in the bourgeois world where an absolute impoverishment of the working people could be observed. First and foremost this applies to countries where the penetration of the capitalist mode of production destroyed or disturbed the old social system without superseding it.

Here Varga's argument is, to say the least, strained because Marx's thesis on the absolute impoverishment of the working class was formulated solely in terms of the industrial proletariat of capitalist countries. Varga's motive here, even after Stalin's death, was obviously to separate himself again from any taint of 'revisionism'.

The American Communist Party takes a backward look

At the enlarged meeting of the National Committee of the American Communist Party held from 28 April to 1 May 1956,[4] Eugene Dennis, the General Secretary of the Party, discussed the errors of the past—primarily those made during the years 1945 to 1949. In these years, the Party suffered greatly. Its top leaders were tried in 1949 and ultimately sent to prison, except for those who forfeited bail and disappeared into the 'underground' which functioned, if ineffectively, for some years thereafter. The Party lost almost all of its influence in labour. It lost over one-third of its membership as well as its influence with hundreds of erstwhile friends like Mike Quill and Phil Murray. But the final blow came after Khrushchev's so-called 'secret speech' in 1956 when the Party suffered its most damaging split. The largest exodus was led by John Gates in 1957.

Dennis, in recounting the mistakes of the past, was actually indulging in a longstanding practice in communist circles—self-criticism, both individual and collective. Browder, recalling his early encounter with the religious antecedent of this phenomenon, said: 'The ritual was that of purification by public confession of sin, a primitive doctrine which I was destined to face in triumphant resurgence almost half a century later in the communist party.'[5] Browder also noted that the same 'sinners' confessed the very same sins every week and this appears to be the case with the Marxist-Leninists and dialectical materialists. Indeed, one might define Marxism-Leninism or more properly, dialec-

[4] Eugene Dennis, 'The Communists Take a New Look', pamphlet (New York: New Century Publishers, 1956).

[5] 'The Reminiscences of Earl Browder', Oral History Project, Columbia University (1965).

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tical materialism, as it has been practised, as that science which enables one to predict the past.

Dennis's retrospective critique of the Party during the post-war period, 1945 to 1956, revolved around the Party's over-estimation of the three standard propaganda motifs of the times—war, fascism, and economic crisis. It is obvious that Dennis found many of the misconceptions in Foster's writings, to say nothing of his own. But there can be no doubt that they expressed the general consensus of opinion and feeling of the majority of the Party members. Determined as they were to disarm 'US imperialism', they ruled out any hope of peaceful coexistence 'under existing conditions'. Dennis was certainly correct when he said that 'without doubt, the past period has been the most trying period in our Party's history'.

Concerning the first of the post-war motifs, Dennis lamented that even as late as the middle of 1955, many Party members thought that the major division within the camps of US monopolists was between 'those who want war now and those who want war when ready'. Said Dennis:

> While we repeatedly asserted that the third world war is not inevitable, the fact is that we frequently tended to evaluate certain war preparations and threats of Washington as if a new world war was not only possible—but almost inevitable. This was so at various intervals in 1948–49, during one phase of the war in Korea, and again in 1954, around the time of the conference on Indo-China.

The only thing inevitable here was confusion, as is evident in Dennis's admission that:

> Despite our statements regarding the profound world significance of the armistice in Korea and the negotiated peace agreements in Indo-China, our Party did not draw the full conclusions from the big and favourable changes in international relations which these events signalled. Otherwise, how can we explain that in 1954 the Party's programme coupled its observation that Wall Street had 'lost the immediate opportunities to launch an anti-Soviet war' with the prediction that in 1954 the country was confronted with an immediate war threat?

Dennis linked the problem of the first motif directly with the second: 'There is no doubt that errors of judgment and analysis as regards the war danger also at times influenced the Party's estimate of the fascist danger.' For instance, he said, 'in our statement of 4 June 1951, while we stressed that the third world war and fascism were not inevitable, actually we placed things as being a few minutes before midnight'. Fear about the semi-illegalization of the Party, according to Dennis, 'reduced the Party cadre and membership by one-third'. Dennis's remarks included an inherent critique of the whole development and necessity of the underground which was a very delicate matter considering that many Party members looked upon this venture as one of almost heroic sacrifice.

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Finally, Dennis linked the second motif with the third: 'The repeated overestimation of the imminence of a new cyclical crisis [that] we have made since 1945' has

> caused us to exaggerate the process of radicalization of the masses and diverted the Party from advancing or properly stressing certain concrete economic and political demands then and now confronting the masses, irrespective of exactly when a major economic crisis develops. It placed exaggerated emphasis on converting government-subsidized or privately-owned facilities in arms production to peacetime production, and bypassed the pressing need of nationalizing certain industries. It adversely affected our tactical line generally, and especially our united front relations and work in the trade unions. Above all, this analysis of the economic situation led the Party to consider that in 1956 there would be a full-blown economic crisis, which in turn would confront the country with the immediate threat of fascism and war.

In Dennis's concluding remarks on the economic crisis, he stated that:

> One of the lessons that has to be learned from these repeated mistakes in the last decade . . . is the necessity to judge economic and political facts and trends factually and objectively, not to be swayed by other opinions, including those of diverse Marxist economists who have not made a thorough study of all the economic factors and trends in the United States.

What were the inevitable results of the Party's overestimation of these motifs? Some of these have already been noted in Dennis's remarks above. In addition, he recounted that:

> . . . over the past years the Party has suffered heavy organizational losses and that its political influence has been lessened in many areas and fields. Furthermore, while the Party directly or indirectly, has developed certain mass activity in the fight for peace, civil rights and civil liberties, with few exceptions it did not succeed in setting wide masses in motion. Moreover, it exercised little influence in most of the recent strikes and its role in the historic AFL-CIO merger has been extremely unsatisfactory.

Perhaps the most telling admission that Dennis made in the course of his wide-ranging backward look was the following:

> In addition to the sectarian influences in our estimate of the fascist danger connected with certain errors in estimating the war danger and the imminence of a cyclical economic crisis, etc., I also believe that in the struggle against the menace of fascism, we underestimated in practice the nationwide, mass strength of American democratic traditions, sentiments, and processes. I believe we underplayed the latent power and mass fighting resistance, as well as the unique role of the trade unions—and this despite the Meanys. Also I believe we overlooked the specific role of the struggles between and within the two major parties—as well as certain peculiarities of our governmental structure—which operate, indirectly, as a certain impediment to the drive of the most

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reactionary monopoly circles towards establishing a full-fledged police state system.

It would almost appear that the American Communist Party had finally discovered at least some of the advantages of the American democratic system. Dennis thus made clear, if too late, that for a whole decade the Party was fighting ideological windmills and that the path it had travelled from 1946 to 1956 led to one disaster after another. And it all began with the 1947 and 1948 attacks on Varga.

Varga has the last word

One last piece of writing by Varga makes a fitting climax to his rebellious spirit towards the end of his life. Only this piece was not published officially, but circulated through the Soviet underground press (*samizdat*) in typed copies. Although Varga's own title was 'The Russian Way and its Results', it has become known as 'Varga's Testament'.

Written shortly before his death in 1964, Varga's 'Testament' did not reach the attention of the West until 1970. A resumé with quotations was published in Paris in *Politique Aujourd'hui* and in Vienna in the *Wiener Tagebuch* simultaneously in May 1970. Both magazines are the official publications of dissident communist groups, the French edited by Paul Noirot and the Austrian by Hans Marek.

Although this last effort of Varga's has no special relevance to the problems facing the American Communist Party in 1947–48, it could have relevance in the 1970s if the Party examined it honestly and understood it.

This is not the place for a long resumé of Varga's 'Testament', but a few points are worthy of comment.

First: Varga comments on a long accepted thesis that Lenin, following Marx, first believed that a successful socialist revolution in Russia was only possible if it was followed by revolutions in Western European capitalist countries. Wrote Varga: 'Neither in the '20's nor in the '40's and until today has there been a socialist revolution in any country of classical capitalism.' Thus in 1923, Lenin revised his view and said that because Russia had 'no alternative', she must create the conditions permitting the passage to socialism without passing through capitalism.

Second: the October Revolution, Varga argues, was only socialist in part because it was both a peasant and a bourgeois revolution. The peasants' aspirations for 'land and freedom' and those of the proletariat for 'scientific socialism' were inherently contradictory.

Third: Varga also dealt with a most serious contradiction in the October Revolution. It had to do with the fact that certain *déclassé* elements, i.e. those people who had either lost or never owned land and who were generally unemployed, were frustrated and bitter and envious of those better off than themselves. Varga blames these elements in the Party for the excesses committed during the Civil War. After the

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Civil War, Varga says, these were the ones who drove for political power. They had a penchant for autocracy and were searching for a 'leader' of a special kind. Varga calls these elements the 'ultras' of the revolution. And he was surely aware that it was precisely the petty bourgeois *déclassés* that brought Hitler to power in Germany. Here he came close to drawing a parallel between Hitler and Stalin. However, Varga, on the other hand, does not completely exonerate Lenin and put all the blame on Stalin for the development of Russia into a self-perpetuating bureaucracy. The bourgeois state, in Lenin's conception, was to be replaced by a dictatorship of the proletariat and administered through a system of 'democratic centralism'. The proletariat was then to take over the machinery of the state and create a new state that, however, would gradually 'wither away'. But soon a central government was formed with a very complex and heavy bureaucratic organization. And soon there came into being the Cheka and the GPU to protect the new regime not only against counter-revolution but against any kind of opposition. Much to Lenin's surprise, the process of bureaucratization grew very rapidly and just before his death in 1924 he wrote, 'The struggle against bureaucracy will take decades; this is the most difficult struggle'. Varga noted that Lenin still considered the bureaucratization of the Soviet apparatus a transitory phenomenon and believed that in 10–15 years the trade unions would nevertheless concentrate in their hands control of the entire economy and that in 20 to 30 years the peasants would be regrouped into cooperatives by peaceful means. In both instances, Varga concluded, Lenin proved to be the 'dreamer of the Kremlin'.

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Generations and the Theory of Revolution

Lewis S. Feuer

TO what extent are social and political revolutions founded on generational movements of the young against the old? Crane Brinton, penetrating analyst of revolutions, did not think there was any significant evidence that a generational factor was involved in the revolutionary process. The Jacobins, as shown in his classical study, were not usually young men; they were rather middle-aged revolutionists. The average age of the members of ten Jacobin clubs varied from 38·3 to 45·4 years.[1] 'As far as the rank and file of these clubs went, the notion that revolutionists are recruited from the young and irresponsible was not borne out', wrote Brinton.[2] The leaders of the American, French, and Russian revolutions were, in Brinton's view, 'not even strikingly, precociously young. These leaders are usually in middle age, the thirties and forties, and thus younger than most of the politically prominent in stable societies, which naturally incline to the rule of the old. The leadership of the Russian Revolution which, with the distortion that comes from contemporaneousness, we are likely to regard as the most 'radical', was on the average the oldest in years of all our revolutions.'[3] Such then was Brinton's conclusion: revolutions are not in any basic sense generational movements.

This then is the question which we would re-open. To begin with, was the Russian Revolution led by young, middle-aged, or old men? Unlike the French revolutionists, Russian revolutionists were preeminently a young group. When the fifth congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party took place in London in 1907, with all factions represented, Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks, the average age of the approximately 330 delegates was under 28 years. 'How young they all are!' exclaimed the American soap millionaire who financed the Congress; Joseph Fels, who conjoined a faith in the single-tax with the manufacture of excellent soaps, was entranced as he watched a pre-organization meeting of the Congress.[4] Fels' obser-

1 'The average age for the group was 41·8 years. There were some boys in each club, but almost always the sons of prominent members. As can be seen from the average age, the young were quite balanced by the old. In no sense can these clubs be considered a collection of foolhardy young men.' Clarence Crane Brinton, *The Jacobins: An Essay in the New History* (New York, 1930), p. 56.

2 Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, revised ed. (New York, 1965), p. 97.

3 Ibid. p. 105.

4 Ivan Maisky, *Journey into the Past*, tr. Frederick Holt (London, 1962), p. 142. Also cf. Arthur P. Dudden and Theodore H. Von Laue, 'The RSDLP and Joseph Fels. A Study in Intercultural Contact', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. LXI (1955), pp. 21–47. Joseph Stalin, *The London Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Notes of a Delegate*, reprinted, Moscow, 1955, p. 10.

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vation was altogether accurate. Lenin recognized explicitly that it was the youth to whom his movement primarily appealed. He agreed in 1903 with the judgment of the police that '"the most disturbing elements of the industrial population" were the persons between 17 and 20 years of age'. To a Menshevik writer who complained that young workers predominated in the Social Democratic Party, while older workers with families tended to drift away, Lenin replied, according to Krupskaya, with words from Engels: 'Is it not natural that young people should predominate in our revolutionary party? We are the party of the future and the future belongs to the youth. We are the party of innovators, and young people always follow innovators most willingly. We are the party of selfless struggle against everything that is old and rotten, and the youth will always be in the van of revolutionary struggle'. Lenin wrote of the Bolsheviks as the party of the young: '[L]et us leave it to the Constitutional Democrats to pick up "tired" old men of 30, revolutionaries who "have become wiser" and Social-Democratic renegades. We shall always be the party of the youth of the advanced class'.[5]

There was indeed a great difference between the Russian and French revolutionists with respect to age. Whereas the members of the Jacobin clubs were on the average of middle-age, the Russian leaders, less than 28 years old on the average in 1907, were indeed young people. In making such comparative judgments of age, it would be a mistake to restrict ourselves to 1917 as the sole base year for evaluations. There are two bases for comparative judgment as to the ages of revolutionists: first, their ages at the time of revolutionary commitment, and second, the ages of the revolutionary activists at the time of their 'conquest of power'. The Russian revolutionists were professional revolutionists, and in the life of a professional revolutionist, the critical age is his moment of decision, when he embraces the vocation of a revolutionist. The French Jacobins were men of middle-age when they made their decisions for the revolutionary calling; the Russian Bolsheviks were almost always youngsters. The Russian revolutionists had already been involved in one revolution, that of 1905, which however had failed to achieve its main objectives. In 1907, the Russian socialists, plying their vocation, were already enduring a counter-revolution. When 1917 came, their ranks were rejuvenated, as we shall see, in a remarkable way. The corps of professional revolutionists always remained at any one time predominantly a group of young men. The French Revolution by contrast was not an ongoing process fashioned over several years by a corps of revolutionists; Danton, Robespierre and Marat were in 1789 engaged in their respective bourgeois professions, with no notion of a revolutionist's mission. Not so the Russian revolutionists of 1907; in their mid-twenties, and having failed in one revolution, they were

[5] These passages are cited in N. K. Krupskaya, *On Education: Selected Articles and Speeches*, tr. G. P. Ivanov-Mumyiev (Moscow, 1957), pp. 157–59.

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already, as professionals, planning their next. Unlike the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution of 1917 was, to begin with, thus led by men who in their youth had articulated their commitment to revolution. Their success in 1917 was the outcome of efforts which they commenced toward this goal in their youth; the seizure of power in October 1917 was the culminating act of a revolutionary process in which the chief leaders had been involved for more than a decade.

IN trying to work out a general law under which the diverse generational phenomena of the French, American, and Russian Revolutions can be subsumed, it soon becomes clear that we shall not discover the underlying uniformities so long as all these instances are simply classified as 'revolutions'. For not only did each 'revolution' have a different generational pattern, but some revolutions have clearly been more 'revolutionary' than others. To begin on an obvious level, if we use the definition of 'revolutions' as changes realized by force in the constitution of societies, we see at once that there are two variables which can be measured in large part extensively rather than intensively, (in terms of more or less)—thus, we can enquire: how much force was used? and how far-reaching were the changes in social relations? The extent of force used can be measured in terms for instance of the relative number of persons of the opposition killed or imprisoned; the degree of social change can be measured in terms of changes in the relative numbers of the classes of property-owners, as well as the emergence of new classes in the novel social structure. Both factors might be used as components in defining an index of revolutionary change. Thus, a dynastic change might involve the killing of many persons, but involve no changes in the social structure. The American Revolution was exceedingly low in both components of the index; for scarcely any of the opposition Tory party were executed.[6] A witness of the two revolutions wrote that 'the spirit of seventy-five' had no resemblance to 'the spirit of Jacobinism'; people who shouted 'God save great George our king' were mildly treated, whereas in France their heads would have been set on pikes. 'As compared with the committee-men of the French Revolution', wrote Van Tyne, 'these Whig committee-men were not bloody-minded'.[7] Between thirty-five to forty thousand persons lost their lives in the Terror of the French Revolution; less than seventeen thousand of them had the benefit of a condemnation in court.[8] Still, the French Terror had none of the

[6] '[T]he actual number of executions was very small as compared with the number either found guilty of treason by actual trial or attainted with that crime.' Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Loyalists in the American Revolution* (New York, 1902), p. 273. Van Tyne mentions specifically seven persons who were tried in civil courts, and hanged. When two persons were executed in Philadelphia, four thousand people marched in mourning at their burial procession. Ibid. pp. 184, 270, 271.

[7] Van Tyne, op. cit. p. 66.

[8] Donald Greer, *The Incidence of the Terror during the French Revolution: A Statistical Interpretation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1935), pp. 37, 109.

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massive proportions of Bolshevik and White Terrorism. According to William H. Chamberlin, it was not improbable that 'the numbers of people killed by the Cheka, by the White military executioners, by the punitive expeditions which both sides employed very freely against recalcitrant persons' exceeded the losses in Civil War battles.[9] Apart from approximately fifty thousand persons executed by the Cheka according to its regular procedure, there were the 'major mass killings' it carried out in such cities as Kiev and Tashkent, especially before they were evacuated. An incalculable number of persons met death at the hands of mobs or lynching bands of soldiers and sailors. Sanctions, furthermore, were decreed against the families of deserters; one must remember that, according to official Soviet figures, there were 2,846,000 deserters during the years 1919 and 1920.[10] A conjecture as to the extent of the sanctions enforced cannot be made, but two communist military leaders in 1918 did protest against 'Trotsky's extremely light-hearted attitude toward such things as shooting'.[11] Evidently, however, it was usually only the 'main instigators' among the deserters who were executed.[12] From the evidence assembled by Chamberlin, it seems likely that Sorokin was close to the truth when he wrote that no less than six hundred thousand persons were killed by the Cheka without any trial during the time from October, 1917 to 1922.[13]

THE touchstone of revolutionary change, however, when the memory of civil wars is forgotten, remains the extent of the alterations in the social structure. And here we are led to a distinction between two types of revolution which will be most important in understanding the role of the generations, that between *eliminative revolutions* and *originative* ones; Marx's analysis, indeed, tended to obliterate the distinction between these two types of revolution. The French Revolution, by way of an example, was primarily an eliminative one; it removed, in Marx's phrase, the 'fetters' on the developing productive forces. A fetter is a chain, an encumbrance, an impediment; when you get rid of it, your movements flourish more freely. Thus, the French Revolution eliminated feudal dues and tolls, abolished labour taxes, and removed the social obstacles to the rise of meritorious persons in the army and government service. An eliminative revolution is one which confines itself to an eradication of those features of social institutions and organizations which have been judged oppressive or exploitative. The hallmark of an eliminative revolution is 'abolition'; it is a work of negation. But it requires little social imagination for the fashioning of novel institutions. Thus, an eliminative revolution appears as the last

[9] William Henry Chamberlin, *The Russian Revolution: 1917–1921* (New York, 1935), Vol. II, p. 81.
[10] Ibid. pp. 30, 75, 83.
[11] Ibid. p. 39.
[12] Ibid. p. 30.
[13] Pitirim A. Sorokin, *The Sociology of Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1925), p. 142.

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term of a continuously developing social series. A historian such as de Tocqueville could regard the French Revolution as the terminal stage of a trend initiated by Richelieu and Louis XIV in the preceding century; it completed the centralization of government; and the bourgeoisie, who had gradually taken control of France's economic life before 1789, not only removed the last encumbrances, but took over the political power. The bourgeoisie, however, was not called upon to create a new economic system; rather it allowed the developing old one to extend itself; its creative imagination was required only for the setting up of new political institutions such as the National Assembly to replace the monarchy. An old class was extirpated politically, as its long-time rival acquired a hegemony. But the old economic relations were fulfilled by removing fetters rather than qualitatively altered.

It is quite otherwise with a socialist revolution. Marx, for instance, refused to undertake to describe what the structure and institutions of a socialist society would be like. For he could not, through an extrapolation of additional removals of fetters of bourgeois society, arrive at a conception of the socialist society.[14] Therefore he asserted that he would await the outcome of the creative forces of the working class following on their conquest of political power. A French or American revolutionist would not have felt any insuperable difficulty in the way of his explaining what their new society would be like. Strangely enough, it now becomes clear that Marx's metaphor of revolutions as removing the 'fetters' is more a characterization of 'bourgeois' revolutions than of socialist ones. For, suppose we were to remove the metaphorical 'fetters' which capitalism is said to place on the productive process.[15] When the payment of a feudal due to the lord was abrogated, the average peasant continued much in the same way to till his land. But when business men and managers were destroyed, and the market system itself abolished, when the government proposed to establish a national planning mechanism to supersede the 'anarchy of production', and to distribute centrally the national product, then a whole set of new institutions had to be improvised and created. Removing the 'fetters' on the old productive system simply involved a situation in which a lot of enterprises became idle as they found themselves unable to get their raw materials, their machines, their capital, and found that they were unable to manage themselves. The emergence of socialist society thus involves a 'qualitative leap' which the 'bourgeois revolution' never required. Bourgeois society grew up within the towns, within the interstices of feudal society itself which it provided with manufactures and centres of trade. The medieval bourgeois segment increasingly exerted

[14] Therefore Bernard Shaw could say in his speech at the celebration of his seventieth birthday: 'I have read Karl Marx, and I can find nothing in him about socialism'. *The Socialism of Shaw*, ed. James Fuchs (New York, 1926), p. 154.

[15] Lenin had written confidently that among 'the direct consequences' of the socialization of production would be 'an immense increase in the productivity of labour'. Cf. D. Ryazanoff, *Karl Marx* (New York, 1927), p. 147.

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its attraction on and competed successfully with the feudal environment. Feudal dues were converted over time into monetary payments, and later perceived as extortions, not exchanges. A bourgeois revolution was not, however, needed to create a bourgeois society; economic developments themselves did that. But a socialist revolution, on the other hand, does precede the creation of a socialist society; it therefore has to originate novel social forms.

WHAT then does the character of a revolution, its nature as eliminative or originative, have to do with the role of generations during revolutionary change? In an eliminative revolution, there is much less disruption of the hitherto existing pattern of generational relations. In a bourgeois revolution, an aristocracy is displaced; the internal structure of relations within the middle class may, however, be little affected in the process. The high status of the bourgeois father, indeed, may be reinforced. Many of Balzac's novels depict the elevated prestige of the bourgeois father, whose position had become higher than that which he had held before the bourgeois revolution. An eliminative revolution against feudalism may similarly emancipate serfs to become the owners of land; a class revolution takes place as the lords are removed. But no generational revolution need necessarily accompany these events. The serf father becomes the peasant father; the sons may continue to remain in the subordinate position. True, if a town economy has already been emerging, sons may have already been fleeing from the land. Then a generational revolution will be super-imposed on a class revolution, as the sons of serfs claim the liberty to leave the land. But the class revolution in and of itself will not result in the ouster of the father from his economic place by the sons. Indeed, the peasant father is a more magisterial figure than his serf counterpart.

A generational revolution, however, is always involved in the process of an originative revolution. A generational upsurge at once seeks novel institutions in which the young will be the new ruling elite, while conversely, a revolution which seeks to improvise novel institutions will call upon the young to be its cadres. In the Bolshevik Revolution, for instance, as Krupskaya vividly described its felt experience, 'New fields of state activity, new forms of work were being created . . . Our people were terribly nervous. Most of them were quite new to the business and lacked confidence in themselves.'[16] A quondam graduate student of economics might suddenly find himself a commissar of finance. One party member visted Smolny, the Bolshevik headquarters, looking for a job; he mentioned that he had studied banking at the University of London, whereupon he was told that he was to be director of the State Bank. 'I was frightened and replied that I had no desire to hold this post, since it was absolutely "not in my line",' he

[16] N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, tr. Bernard Isaacs (Moscow, 1959), p. 420.

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recalled. A youthful disregard of the old mores flourished in this originative setting. When Lenin appointed Osinsky to be commissar of the State Bank, he told him, 'Don't come back without money.' Then, at gun point, the bank teller was obliged to put out the required funds. The Bolshevik bankers stuffed them in old sacks, swung them over their shoulders, and returned to Lenin's office. They gave him the money 'with great solemnity'. He placed it in a wardrobe. That was the first Soviet treasury.[17]

With the advent of the Bolshevik Revolution, thousands of people surged forward, feeling sincerely within themselves, as Simon Liberman has told, 'that by one lightning stroke they could solve Russia's and humanity's most complex problems'. 'Most of them were young peasants and workers . . .' Their originative ideas seemed to them of 'planetary significance'.[18] They found their spokesman in a 'magician of economics', Larin, born in 1892, who 'buzzed around with grandiose schemes which were to revolutionize man's entire economy by turning the capitalist chaos into a harmonious system of socialism. When the Bolsheviks seized power, a wide field was at once opened for Larin's utopias and fantasies.' Larin inspired and founded a whole series of industrial 'Tops and Centres', central administrations and committees for all the industries. He laid the bases for the Gosplan, or the State Planning Commission, and for the Supreme Council of People's Economy. He was aptly called the 'Saint-Just of Russian Economics.'[19] It was typical of the generational Utopianism that the new government and administrators thought that the will was omnipotent, 'that it would be enough to issue new orders, and, presto', production would commence. In Larin's suite, 'fantastic plans were being prepared, decrees feverishly manufactured, and all kinds of utopians and ne'er do well inventors stewed in a state of constant excitement'.[20] There were young Larins all over, with all sorts of weird schemes. Young inventors proposed to repeal the laws of thermodynamics, and if a person of the older generation was sceptical of or unenthusiastic about their schemes, he risked his life.[21] One such young inventor, for instance, who had a plan for a perpetual motion machine, had the supporting good will of the head of the Soviet secret police, Dzerzhinsky; consequently the one realistic administrator in the timber industry, the Menshevik Simon Liberman, was obliged to engage in all sorts of bureaucratic manoeuvres so that he could reject the perpetual motion scheme without having himself arrested as a saboteur. Then there was the dentist who proposed to use pine cones to solve all of Russia's fuel problems; he had the backing of Lenin himself.[22] Liberman could not prevent the

[17] Jesse D. Clarkson, *A History of Russia* (New York, 1961), p. 488. N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, pp. 418–19.
[18] Simon Liberman, *Building Lenin's Russia* (Chicago, 1945), pp. 26–27.
[19] Ibid. pp. 21–22.
[20] Ibid. p. 3.
[21] Ibid. pp. 26–28.
[22] Ibid. p. 29.

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wasteful expenditure of several million rubles, but was fortunate in narrowly escaping with his life. The old technicians felt the pervasive impact of a generational revolution: 'We were part of a generation doomed to die out.'[23] They felt tolerated, if at all, on sufferance. A new generation in revolution seeks to create a novel economy, a novel science, a novel way of life; as seekers after an originative revolution, they aim not merely to remove old, obstructive fetters; rather they wish to create novel forms of administration and institution, hitherto non-existent.

THE extent to which the Bolshevik Revolution was a generational revolution, superimposing its character on the class and social revolutions, has not been sufficiently appreciated. Petrograd during the first world war became a city of young men. The war had a tremendous impact on the generational composition of the working class. 'The war brought vast changes in the constitution and mood of the working class', wrote Leon Trotsky in his history of the Revolution.[24] The Russian proletariat had a 'revolutionary freshness'; 'It was thrown directly into the factory cauldron snatched directly from the plough'. [H]ence—along with other causes—October, the first workers' government in the world', says Trotsky.[25] With wartime there ensued 'breaches effected by the mobilization', reaching as many as 40 per cent of the workers; young immigrants, often boys, came to the cities from the villages to fill the gaps. Such were the recruits in large enterprises, those employing more than 500, which almost doubled in the Petrograd province.

Above all, however, there was the huge, volatile concentration of soldiers in Petrograd, numbering in February 1917 as many as 150,000 men.[26] They were in effect a concentration of the younger generation, under conditions which accentuated resentment and restlessness. Unwilling to go to the front, the young soldiers in these new garrisons spent their time in card-playing, drink, and debauchery; life grew monotonous and purposeless. The garrisons, wrote Victor Chernov, were transformed into 'huge laboratories for making unformed peasant lads into morally empty people'. The number of deserters from the Russian Army grew during the critical months from 365,000 on 1 August, 1917 to 2,000,000 on 1 October 1917.[27] Young soldiers and deserters were the mainstay of the 'daily crowd' which went aimlessly from one street to another listening to speeches. 'The "street" bred its own noisy political life.'[28] In Chernov's view, the class basis of Bolshevism was shifting at this time from the Proletariat to the Lumpenproletariat, a sin of which the Bolsheviks had always accused the anarchists. But the

[23] Ibid. p. 213.
[24] Leon Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, tr. Max Eastman, Vol. I (New York, 1932), p. 418.
[25] Ibid. p. 468.
[26] Ibid. p. 217.
[27] Victor Chernov, *The Great Russian Revolution*, p. 416.
[28] Ibid. p. 417.

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underlying reality was more a generational change in the mass base available in the big cities. The peasant lads in uniform were not hobos, or confirmed migratory labourers; they were not lumpenproletarians in a class sense; rather they were a generational stratum, resenting the notion that they might be sent to the front, resenting the military discipline, and the endless war. Among the workers, the highly skilled were often middle-aged men, frequently with strong leanings to the Mensheviks. The newer group of younger workers, however, began to make common cause with the newly formed Factory Committees against the Trade Unions. The soldiers, however, were, above all, and far more than the workers, the activists of the Revolution.[29]

It was soldiers, rather than workers, who predominated in the Soviets.[30] In February 1917, for every two worker-delegates in the Petrograd Soviet, there were five soldiers: 'The rules of representation were extremely elastic, and they were always stretched to the advantage of the soldiers. Whereas the workers elected only one delegate for every thousand, the most petty military unit would frequently send two. The grey army cloth became the general ground-tone of the Soviet'.[31] In March 1917, at the beginning of the revolution, the overwhelming majority of the soldiers 'almost to the last man' inscribed themselves not for the Bolsheviks but for the Social Revolutionary Party, even as the workers supported the Mensheviks.[32] During the course of a few months, however, young soldiers and young workers were following the Bolshevik initiative. From the ranks of young workers came the Red Guards, emanating not from the trade unions but from the factory and shop committees, and obedient to the Bolshevik Central Committee; twenty thousand or so Red Guards provided a legion weighted with young generational warriors at the time of the Bolshevik seizure of power, and were the basis for Lenin's claim that the armed workers were with him. As late as 1920, however, the trade unions, with their six million or so members, composing the greater part of the Russian working class, were still predominantly Menshevik in their sympathies and anti-Bolshevik in their convictions. Gregory Zinoviev, the head of the Communist International, thought that 90 per cent of the working class was anti-Communist.[33] That is why the Bolshevik spokesmen had to reject what they called 'formalistic' principles of workers' democracy. They looked instead to the young generational activists.

[29] Ibid. pp. 419, 430. Raphael R. Abramovitch, *The Soviet Revolution: 1917–1939* (London, 1962), pp. 80, 83, 89.

[30] In the Austrian Revolution of 1918–19 as well, the soldier was the typical activist. 'In the days of the upheaval the revolutionary type was the homecoming soldier, filled with wild passions by his fearful experiences, who believed that, with rifle and bomb, he could overturn everything that existed.' Later, the direction of the revolution passed to older men, the trade unionists. Cf. Otto Bauer, *The Austrian Revolution*, tr. H. J. Stenning (London, 1925), p. 177.

[31] Trotsky, op. cit. Vol. I, pp. 217–18.

[32] Ibid. p. 167.

[33] Trotsky, op. cit. Vol. III, p. 188–89. Leonard Schapiro, *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy; Political Opposition in the Soviet State: First Phase, 1917–1922* (London, 1955), pp. 40, 201, 307.

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Most crucial, however, for the success of the October Revolution, '"the fundamental question about which the whole movement in October was built up and organized"' was the question of the allegiance of the Petrograd garrison.[34] The hesitating soldiers of the Peter and Paul Fortress, and later the last uncertain bicycle battalion, recruited from the families of prosperous peasants and middle class folk, succumbed to Trotsky's powerful oratory.[35] Whether in the garrison or the interminable political meetings the young were now always conspicuous—boys and girls.[36] As for the sailors of the Kronstadt naval base, as their historian writes, 'in 1905 and 1917 it was these very youths from the countryside who had given Kronstadt its reputation as a hotbed of revolutionary extremism'.[37]

During this revolutionary period, moreover, the population of the Russian cities was falling drastically. The urban population declined by almost a third. The old were dying; the middle-aged were fleeing to the countryside searching for food. Between October 1917 and August 1920, 'the population of Petrograd fell from almost 2·5 million to about three-quarters of a million, a drop of nearly two-thirds'.[38] Moscow, the Holy City, lost nearly half its people. The Bolshevik Revolution was sustained by cities in which the young were a disproportionately large segment of the population.[39]

The delegates elected to the Soviet by the soldiers were often young Jewish intellectuals. The reason for this was, as Victor Shklovsky pointed out, that 'only the Jewish intellectuals were common soldiers at the moment of revolution'. Thus, 'about 40 per cent of those elected to the most responsible positions in the army were Jews'. Articulate, literate, and having been debarred from officerships, they took the lead in debate. The Jewish soldier-intellectuals, however, were at variance with their elders, for 'the Jewish bourgeoisie in the over-30 age bracket' remained firmly anti-Bolshevik.[40] Bolshevism became the ideology of the young soldiers. 'The vast majority of them saw the revolution as a chance to take some extra leave', and the Petrograd

[34] Trotsky, op. cit. Vol. III, pp. 288–89.
[35] Ibid. pp. 119, 213–14.
[36] Ibid. pp. 115, 117.
[37] Paul Avrich, *Kronstadt 1921* (Princeton, 1971), p. 90.
[38] Ibid. p. 24.
[39] More than three centuries ago, Thomas Hobbes observed the crucial role of the younger generation of city dwellers in the victory of the English Revolution. '[T]here can hardly arise a long or dangerous rebellion, that has not some such overgrown city with an army or two in its belly to foment it.' The Parliamentary Army fought more keenly, and with a valour sharpened by malice because they numbered 'a great many London apprentices, who, . . . for want of judgment, scarce thought of such death as comes invisibly in a bullet, and therefore were very hardly to be driven out of the field'. The 'young men' too had been especially susceptible to the propaganda of the preachers. Cf. Thomas Hobbes, *Behemoth: The History of the Causes of the Civil Wars of England*, ed. William Molesworth, reprinted (New York, 1963), pp. 158, 144, 34.
[40] Victor Shklovsky, *A Sentimental Journey: Memoirs, 1917–1922*, tr. Richard Sheldon, Ithaca, 1970, pp. 19, 26, 27, 65, 194. R. H. Bruce Lockhart, *The Two Revolutions* (London, 1967), p. 82.

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Soviet had during the period of the dual power, given its solemn promise to the garrison that, as a reward for their revolutionary services, they would not be sent to the front. The Bolshevik seizure of power seemed the best guarantee for this promise.

BY contrast, the rank and file of French revolutionists, the people who stormed the Bastille, *les vainqueurs de la Bastille*, were unlike those who converged on the Winter Palace. They were, in the first place, overwhelmingly civilian, nearly 600 such among the names of 662 survivors. The great majority were citizens of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. And, writes George Rudé, 'all of these, whether from the Faubourg Saint-Antoine or elsewhere, far from being vagrants or down-and-outs, were men of settled abode and occupation'.[41] It was only a 'legend that the captors were vagrants or social riff-raff . . .' Though there were youngsters among them, this was not the virtual force of a concentrated younger generation which provided the Bolshevik Revolution with its carrier movement. During the last two years of the French Revolution, however, especially from June 1793 to February 1794, the Parisian sans-culottes emerged as a movement which played an important part in the consolidation of the Revolutionary Government and its Reign of Terror. Egalitarian in their motivation, with 'fraternity' their slogan-word, Utopian in aspirations, attracted to violence so that they became known as *buveurs de sang*, they seem to have been constituted mainly of militants of the younger generation. What is a sans-culotte, it was asked in May 1793. And the answer was that he 'is someone who goes everywhere on foot . . . and who lives quite simply with his wife and children, if he has any, on the fourth or fifth floor'. 'In the evening, he goes to his Section, . . . to give his unreserved support to sound resolutions . . . Besides this, the sans-culotte always has his sword with the edge sharpened to give a salutary lesson to all trouble-makers . . . [A]t the first beat of the drum, he will be seen leaving for the Vendée, for the *armée des Alpes* or the *armée du Nord*'.[42] It was a portrait of the youthful revolutionary activist. Indeed, when the conscription and *levée en masse* took many of the youngest men from the Sections to fight the Revolutionary War, the Parisian sans-culotterie lost their most militant cadres.[43] Perhaps that was one reason why the Sections of Paris grew tired, and went home to leave Robespierre to his fate on his last day.[44]

Underlying the manifest content of the Bolshevik Revolution, the class and socialist revolutions, there was thus a latent reality, scarcely

[41] George Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 56–59. The women who marched on Versailles in October, 1789, drawn from every social class, were not described in contemporary accounts as composed of the young. Ibid. p. 73. Also cf. p. 181 ff.

[42] Albert Soboul, *The Parisian Sans-Culottes and the French Revolution, 1793–4* (Oxford, 1964), pp. 37–38.

[43] Ibid. p. 258.

[44] J. M. Thompson, *The French Revolution* (1943, reprinted, New York, 1966), p. 561.

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avowed, of a generational revolution. And the originative character of the Bolshevik Revolution was directly related to the intensity of this underlying generational upheaval. Revolutions, the American, the French, the Russian, have in this respect had the most diverse sociological characters; this diversity, the degree to which a revolution was originative rather than eliminative, has been dependent on the intensity of the generational unrest. It was the great Condorcet who first perceived that the word 'revolution' had its pitfalls, that its common usage led to a distorting of the basic differences between such movements as the American and French Revolutions. Condorcet had been an enthusiast for the American example. He had written in 1786 a pamphlet entitled *The Influence of the American Revolution in Europe.*[45] In that essay and such other writings as *Letters of a Citizen of New Haven,* he had heralded the American Revolution as vindicating the rights of man. But as, hiding in a garret, proscribed by the Convention, he experienced the realities of the French Revolution, he wrote:

> The revolution in France was more far-reaching than that in America and therefore more violent: for the Americans, who were content with the civil and criminal code that they had received from England; who had no vicious system of taxation to reform; and no feudal tyrannies, no hereditary distinctions, no rich, powerful and privileged corporations, no system of religious intolerance to destroy, limited themselves to establishing a new authority in place of that which had been exercised up till then by the British. None of these innovations affected the ordinary people or changed the relations between individuals. In France, on the contrary, the revolution was to embrace the entire economy of society, change every social relation and find its way down to the furthest links of the political chain, even down to those individuals who, living in peace on their private fortune or on the fruits of their labour, had no reason to participate in public affairs—neither opinion nor occupation nor the pursuit of wealth, power or fame.'[46]

The American Revolution evoked considerable sympathy among the French and European upper classes generally. The Revolution in France, however, aroused the hostility of Europeans because it was a social revolution, attacking 'the despotism of kings, the political inequality of any constitution only partly free, the pride of the nobility, the domination, intolerance and wealth of the priesthood, and the abuses of the feudal system', all of which were 'still rampant' in most of Europe.[47] The American Revolution evoked little sense among its contemporary observers and later students of a generational movement.

[45] A translation of the pamphlet by D. Echeverria is published in *William and Mary Quarterly* (January, 1968), pp. 85–108.

[46] Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (1795), tr. June Barraclough (London, 1955), p. 146.

[47] Ibid. p. 147. Also cf. J. Salwyn Schapiro, *Condorcet and the Rise of Liberalism in France* (New York, 1934), pp. 219, 227.

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'We have cause to be glad,' wrote the historian J. Franklin Jameson, 'that our Revolution was carried through by men, who, though still young, had at any rate reached their full maturity of thought and of character.'[48] Most of the revolutionary leaders were indeed under 40, though in a new country with many immigrants, mostly young, and a quickly multiplying people, the distribution of the population's ages was weighted in the direction of youth. But Jameson felt that the American leaders presented nothing like the array of Robespierre, 31 years old in 1789, Desmoulins, 27 years, and Danton, 30. To be sure, young American men had long been enfranchised in the American colonies, and at the outset of the disturbances in the Virginian House of Burgesses, the governor informed the king that they were abetted by 'young, hot and giddy members' from the upland regions.[49] The young, however, were there after all as elected members.[50] On the whole, the American revolutionary party united the generations in its ranks. The 'revolution' was, however, scarcely revolutionary. It brought relatively minor changes in the social structure. As Thomas Jefferson wrote concerning the states: 'On their late revolution, the changes which their new form of government rendered necessary were easily made. It was only necessary to say that the powers of legislation, the judiciary and the executive powers, hitherto exercised by persons of such and such descriptions, should henceforth be exercised by persons appointed in such and such a manner.'[51] The sale of confiscated Loyalist lands in America did not have the egalitarian consequences which the sale of the lands taken from the church and nobility had in France.[52] The degree of hatred which characterized the Russian and French revolutionists was absent among the Americans. John Adams, a revolutionary leader, could without qualms undertake to be the defence counsel in the trial of the British soldiers involved in the 'Boston Massacre'; he secured their acquittal. Such an action scarcely suggests the irreconcilable bitterness and fanaticism of the Russian and French chieftains.

[48] J. Franklin Jameson, *The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement* (1926), reprinted Boston, 1963, p. 15. Evarts Boutell Greene, *The Revolutionary Generation, 1763–1790* (New York, 1963), p. 317. Tocqueville observed that the Americans really 'have not had a democratic revolution', in the sense that they entered into democracy without having to go through a revolutionary process. America also, he observed, was the country in which the family did not exist, in the sense that it was the most free from generational conflict. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, tr. Henry Reeve (New York, 1945), Vol. II, pp. 7, 210.

[49] Claude Halstead Van Tyne, *The Causes of the War of Independence* (New York, 1922), p. 157. Frederick B. Tolles, 'The American Revolution Considered as a Social Movement: A Re-Evaluation', *The American Historical Review*, Vol. LX (1954), p. 5. John C. Miller, *Origins of the American Revolution* (Boston, 1943), pp. 119, 122, 124, 477.

[50] Thus, also the committee which drafted the Constitution of New York State was composed of three young lawyers, 31, 30, and 24 years of age respectively. Allan Nevins, *The American States During and After the Revolution, 1775–1789* (New York, 1924), p. 159.

[51] Ibid. p. 1.

[52] Carl L. Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas* (New York, 1922), pp. 27, 72–73.

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As Carl Becker emphasized in his classic study *The Declaration of Independence,* the colonists were already unconscious Lockeans in their belief that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed 'because they had long been living under governments which did, in a rough and ready way, conform to the kind of government for which Locke furnished a reasoned foundation . . . They were accustomed to living under governments which proceeded, year by year, on a tacitly assumed compact between rulers and ruled, and which were in fact very largely dependent upon the "consent of the governed"'.[53] By contrast, it would never have made sense for anybody to have said that the Russians before the October Revolution were actually living according to Marxist communist patterns. Again we see the basic difference between an eliminative and an originative revolution.

THE American Revolution was indeed remarkable for the fact that the leaders of the moderate and conservative faction, the Federalists, were on the average much younger than the more radical Anti-Federalists. As two historians have written: 'The age difference between these two groups is especially striking. The Federalists were on the average ten to twelve years younger than the Anti-Federalists. At the outbreak of the Revolution, George Washington, at 44, was the oldest of the lot; six were under 35 and four were in their twenties. Of the Anti-Federalists, only three were under 40 in 1776, and one of these, Samuel Bryan, the son of George Bryan, was a boy of 16.'[54] What stands out most, however, is that these two groups, despite differences of opinion, achieved a generational collaboration in the making of the revolution and the adoption of the Constitution of the United States.

THUS, as we have seen, the Russian Revolution had the character of a generational movement to the greatest degree, the American Revolution the least, while the French was intermediary.[55] And concomitantly, the American Revolution was more purely eliminative than the others, and least originative; the French Revolution was predominantly eliminative though with some originative aspects; the Russian Revolution was the most originative.[56]

[53] Carl L. Becker, *The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas* (New York, 1922), pp. 27, 72–73.

[54] Stanley Elkins and Eric McKitrick, *The Founding Fathers: Young Men of the Revolution* (Washington, 1962), p. 23.

[55] Jefferson observed in 1787 as Minister in France the alignment of the generations: 'Your nation is advancing to a change of constitution. The young desire it, the middle-aged are not averse, the old alone oppose it.' The following year, as he noted the decline of the royal authority, he wrote that the revolution in public opinion would retain its ground 'because it is defended by the young, in opposition to the old only'. Cf. Charles Downer Hazen, *Contemporary American Opinion of the French Revolution* (Baltimore, 1897), pp. 27–28.

[56] The one successful European communist movement, outside the Soviet Union, was the Yugoslav. Many of Tito's close associates were 'young men who had already been made fatherless by the great losses in the first world war'. To them Tito became a father-figure. The Yugoslav Communist Party appealed especially to

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WITHIN a given younger generation, however, there will be some persons who will be characterized as having much more of a revolutionary temperament than others. What is the basis of this distinction so important for understanding the political psychology of generations and revolutions? Leon Trotsky, from an abundance of experience of revolutionary types, and with a background of study of Freud and Adler, emphasized the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' personalities. The division between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, the cleavages of factional struggle, were according to Trotsky founded on this divergence of personality-types. '[A]t the time of the split of the second congress', wrote Trotsky, 'the "Iskra" people were divided into *hard* and *soft*'.[57] Lenin the Bolshevik was regarded as hard; Martov the Menshevik as soft. Then what was the causal basis for this division among personalities? In a passage remarkable for its introspective searching, Trotsky indicated that the distinctions of political types corresponded to the relative intensity of their feelings of generational revolt. Trotsky thus analyzed the factional struggle which took place for the control of the editorial board of *Iskra*:

> In 1903 the whole point at issue was nothing more than Lenin's desire to get Axelrod and Zasulich off the editorial board. My attitude toward them was full of respect, and there was an element of personal affection as well . . . But he [Lenin] believed that they were becoming an impediment for the future. This led him to conclude that they must be removed from their position of leadership. I could not agree. My whole being seemed to protest against the merciless cutting off of the older ones when they were at last on the threshold of an organized party. It was my indignation at his attitude that really led to my parting with him at the second congress. His behaviour seemed unpardonable to me, both horrible and outrageous. And yet, politically it was right and necessary, from the point of view of organization. The break with the older ones, who remained in the preparatory stages, was inevitable in any case.[58]

The sheer ferocity of Lenin towards the older revolutionists repelled Trotsky emotionally. The vector of rebellion against the elder generational leaders within the party itself was operative among the proto-Bolsheviks far more than among the proto-Mensheviks. The Mensheviks had rebelled against their family fathers, but they were still willing to accept party elders as surrogate fathers. The Bolsheviks would not accept the elder leaders of a previous generation. Within the small

the young people of a society 'in which older men had all the power and were supposed to have all the wisdom'. The war, and the Partisan Movement, seemed to offer the young a chance to fashion a society in the image of the proved fraternity of revolutionary youth. By contrast, the communist membership among the working class as late as 1940 was exceedingly small. Cf. Phyllis Auty, *Tito: A Biography* (London, 1970), pp. 133, 137, 140.

[57] Leon Trotsky, *Lenin* (New York, 1925, reprinted, 1962), p. 28.

[58] Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (New York, 1930, new ed., 1960), p. 162.

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group of six persons who composed the editorial board of *Iskra* a generational conflict was waged, 'three "old" people and three "young" ones, . . .'[59] The Bolshevik-Menshevik split later defined itself in terms of one's emotional standpoint toward this controversy. Ideological differences were at first not primary; rather more deep-seated emotional divisions were at work. The split arose, as Trotsky described it: 'Not because there had been two different conceptions of revolutionary movement. No, this was not yet the case at this time, . . .' To Trotsky's mind 'the conflicts with the old men were inevitable'[60] because the generational experiences were so different: 'The old men of the party had 20 years of exile back of them.' Therefore their position 'towards the approaching revolution' differed considerably from that of the young. Soon therefore, the struggle was joined: 'four "young" against three "old" men.'[61] Yet one gets the feeling from Trotsky's account that this was a generational battle which would have been fought on the part of Lenin and his proto-Bolsheviks no matter what the experiences and ideology of the elders had been. The will to differentiate himself ideologically from his elders, to define, thereby, his own revolutionary individuality, was present long before some alleged differences were found, which were then magnified disproportionately to provide a rationale for the generational rupture. Lenin made intense efforts to superimpose ideological differences on the generational division. Where respected elders such as Vera Zasulich still retained 'moral political foundations' for their Marxist standpoint, Lenin would polemicize against any thinking in universal, ethical terms. But whatever their philosophical outlook, even when materialist as in Plekhanov's case, it was emotionally necessary for Lenin to define his standpoint as in opposition to that of the elders. 'A feeling of deep organic difference', as Trotsky observed, divided Lenin from such a revered old revolutionist as Vera Zasulich.[62] The 'old' ones said that Lenin had come abroad as a pupil, but now with a 'deadly bite' was trying to replace his teachers.[63]

THOUGH Trotsky was himself repelled by the utter ruthlessness of Lenin's attack on the elder generation, he himself, as he recognized, had been led to the vocation of a revolutionist in large measure precisely because of an emotional vector of generational rebellion. Max Eastman, who wrote a portrait of Trotsky's youth while he was working closely with Trotsky and enjoying his confidence, told how Trotsky's spirit was set along a rebellious path in his early years. His 'relation with his father—according to the testimony of one who lived often in their house—was "none too cordial." That must have been the

[59] Trotsky, *Lenin*, p. 14.
[60] Ibid. p. 56.
[61] Ibid. p. 44.
[62] Trotsky, *Lenin*, p. 18, 23.
[63] Ibid. p. 54.

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fundamental fact in his emotional life, . . .' When his father was embroiled in a quarrel with a poor peasant whose horse had trespassed in his fields, the young son sided with the peasant: 'The deepest and tenderest passion in his heart led him into a mood of rebellion against the dominance of his father. And that mood was more or less continual.'[64] Young Leon from the age of seven was keeping his father's books; but far from espousing bourgeois loyalties, he demanded higher wages for the workers 'with something approaching the nature of a speech for the opposition, . . .'[65] His graduation from high school brought with it a gloomy doubt as to his choice of a career. His father stormed to a friend: 'You ran away from your father too?'[66] Trotsky was now spending his time in discussions with a circle of Narodnik intellectuals. The 'last touch' that was needed to drive him into the camp of the revolution was, writes Eastman, an 'act of paternal tyranny'. The father threatened to stop supporting his son unless he entered his business or undertook engineering studies. Trotsky thereupon burnt his generational bridges. 'His revolt against his father and his revolt against the social system now became united. To assert himself as a grown man was to assert the revolution.'[67] He found a surrogate father in a Narodnik gardener, whose relationship to the 'brood of young rebels that surrounded him was that of an appreciative but prudent father', who gathered his adopted sons in 'a kind of Communal Utopia—. . .'[68] Then in 1899, after two years of exile in Siberia, Trotsky planned to marry Alexandra Lvovna, a comrade older by six years who had converted him to Marxism. Then the father telegraphed the Minister of Justice at Petrograd, and succeeded temporarily in stopping the marriage.[69] The father never gave up the hope of getting the son back into the brewery business until one day 'a detachment of his son's army marched in and took the estate away from him'.[70] A 'liberal' uncle who had interceded in 1896 to persuade Trotsky, on the occasion of his graduation, to visit his father said discerningly that 'Leon's instinct for revolt against tyranny, born in a baby's protest against his father, could never be conquered'.

IT was characteristic of the milder, gentler Mensheviks that for all their Marxist ideology they still retained an emotional attachment to the world of their fathers. Thus, their ablest leader, Martov, 'greatly loved and respected his father and grandfather', and identified keenly with the persecuted Jews. Martov was much moved once when he heard his grandfather denouncing a Jew who had become a deserter by undergoing a conversion to the religion of the persecutors. He began his

64 Max Eastman, *Leon Trotsky: The Portrait of a Youth* (New York, 1925), p. 10.
65 Ibid. p. 11.
66 Ibid. p. 55.
67 Ibid. p. 38.
68 Ibid. p. 39.
69 Ibid. p. 119.
70 Ibid. p. 59.

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political life, indeed, by advocating a separate Yiddish-speaking labour movement, and in his last years his spontaneous criterion for deciding whether a political movement was progressive or reactionary was its attitude toward anti-Semites.[71] Martov was the most respected of the 'softs'.

THE intensity of revolutionary emotion experienced by a given younger generation will always vary directly with the intensity of the rebellion which characterizes their relations with their fathers and mothers. And the self-punishing traits which are concomitant with the revolutionary experience seem to have their origin in the guilt-feelings associated with revolt against the father. The young Chaim Weizmann in a letter in 1903 to Theodor Herzl describing the psychology and behaviour of the young Russian Jews noted how these sociological traits were joined. The future president of Israel told the founder of Zionism: 'Almost all those now being victimised in the entire Social Democratic movement are Jews, and their number grows every day. They are not necessarily young people of proletarian origin; they also come from well-to-do families, and incidentally not infrequently from Zionist families. Almost all students belong to the revolutionary camp; hardly any of them escape its ultimate fate.' During his stay in Minsk, wrote Weizmann, 'they arrested 200 Jewish Social Democrats, not one of whom was more than 17 years old'. One beheld the 'fearful spectacle' of 'the major part of our youth—and no one would describe them as the worst part—offering themselves for sacrifice as though seized by a fever'. This was a 'mass sacrifice', and its 'saddest' aspect was the antipathy which it displayed towards Jewish nationalism 'swelling at times to fanatical hatred. Children are in open revolt against their parents. The elders are confined within tradition and Orthodox inflexibility, the young make their first step a search for freedom from everything Jewish. In one small town near Pinsk, for example, youngsters tore the Torah Scrolls to shreds. This speaks volumes.'[72] These same generational activists felt a compulsion to self-sacrifice.

Here then was the situation of the younger Jewish generation, the activists of Social Democracy: 'Hundreds of thousands of very young boys and girls are held in Russian prisons, or are being spiritually and physically destroyed in Siberia', wrote Weizmann. The Russian Ministry of Justice published figures which showed that almost 30 per cent of those accused of political offences in the years 1901 to 1903 were Jews; their proportion in the population at large was less than 5 per cent.[73] No doubt, the sheer oppressiveness of the restrictions and organized

[71] Israel Getzler, *Martov: a political biography of a Russian social democrat* (Melbourne, 1967), pp. 28, 191.

[72] *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, ed. Meyer W. Weisgal, Vol. II, Series A (London, 1971), p. 307.

[73] Ibid. p. 302. Cf. Arthur Ruppin, *The Jews of To-day*, tr. Margery Bentwick (London, 1913), p. 38. The estimate of the Jewish population is from the census of 1897.

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persecution by the Czarist government bore down most heavily on the younger generation of Jews. But the peculiarly self-sacrificial character of their political activity, and their Utopian faith in the transfiguration which the Revolution would bring to the Russian people, were associated with the intensity of their generational rebellion.

WE have had historians of class, party, unions, guilds, societies, but we have not had generational historians. Take, for instance, the Revolution of 1848, the first effort at an originative revolution in modern history. It has been studied for its June days as a proletarian revolution, as a nationalist revolution, as a bourgeois revolution, and most recently by Lewis Namier as a 'revolution of the intellectuals'. Yet Thomas Carlyle wrote of it all too briefly as a generational revolution, in terms which he would never have applied to the American and French Revolutions:

> And so in City after City, street barricades are piled, and truculent, more or less murderous insurrection begins; populace after populace rises, King after King capitulates or absconds, and from end to end of Europe Democracy has blazed-up explosive, . . . testifying too sadly on what a bottomless volcano, or universal powder-mine of most inflammable mutinous chaotic elements, . . . Society with all its arrangements and acquirements everywhere, in the present epoch, rests! The kind of persons who excite or give signal to such revolutions, students, young men of letters, advocates, editors, hot inexperienced enthusiasts, or fierce and justly bankrupt desperadoes, . . .—might give rise to reflections as to the character of our epoch. Never till now did young men, and almost children, take such a command in human affairs. A changed time since the word *Senior* (Seigneur, or *Elder*) was first devised to signify 'lord' or superior; as in all languages of men we find it to have been! . . . In times when men love wisdom, the old man will ever be venerable, and be venerated, and reckoned noble; in times that love something else than wisdom, and indeed have little or no wisdom, and see little or none to love, the old man will cease to be venerated;—and looking more closely, also, you will find in fact that he has ceased to be venerable, and has begun to be contemptible; . . . In these days, what of *lordship* or leadership is still to be done, the youth must do it, not the mature or middle-aged man; . . .[74]

In such generational 'oscillations' European society was, according to Carlyle, seeking a '*new* rock-basis,' a new generational equilibrium, as we would say.

Whenever political movements have appeared in modern times whose goals have been of an originative character, the creation of novel social institutions, they have invariably been movements of the young. The new generational politicians have then felt instinctively, together with their altruistic motivation, that the new social institutions would be

[74] Thomas Carlyle, 'No. 1. The Present Time', in *Latter-Day Pamphlets* (London, 1872), pp. 6–7.

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staffed and administered by the new people, that is, the young. Even an organization like the English Fabian Society which proposed to adhere to the British constitution in its endeavours, and which forswore the violence of the older Marxists, was above all an agency which appealed to the young; for the young were the candidate-elite for the new society. As Bernard Shaw said, the 'enormous advantage' that the founders of the Fabian Society had over the Social Democratic Federation was 'their homogeneity' not only of class but of 'age'. 'There were no illiterate working-men among them; there were no born poormen; there was not five years' difference between the eldest and the youngest.'[75] Dedicated to the peaceful permeation of the existing ruling elites by socialist ideas, their slogan 'the inevitability of gradualism' conveyed the inevitability of the triumph of the young. Indeed, the emotive power of the notion of 'inevitability' when applied to political process is always based on its imparting to the latter the emotional overtones of the inevitability of the victory of the young over the old, the only inevitable law of development in all sociology because it is founded on the most universal biological truth. Thirty years later, around 1912, when the leaders of the Fabian Society had become elderly, the Old Gang, they were challenged by a new generation of the more libertarian young, the Guild Socialists, led by the Oxford graduate, G. D. H. Cole. '[T]he Guild Socialists were most of them young, energetic, intellectually very able and articulate, with a strong dash of anarchism in their composition, making them impatient of regulation of any kind, and arrogant both in their convictions and in their methods of expressing them. They enjoyed being rude controversialists; . . .'[76] As their historian, Margaret Cole, acknowledges, the theoretical differences between the Old Fabians and the Young Guildsmen were not fundamental, and could have been resolved: 'But the difference was more than theoretical; it was a difference of temperaments, of emotion, and even of style'.[77] The elderly Beatrice Webb entrusted to her diary in 1912 an expression of the antipathy which the young evoked in her: 'The angry youth, with bad complexion, frowning brow and weedy figure is now always a Syndicalist; . . .' This austere Fabian enunciated the law of generational conflict: '[I]f these rebellious youths and maidens had only refrained from asking for a public execution of the old people . . . But these young people delight in "frightfulness" for its own sake; they do violent and dishonourable acts just for the sake of doing them.'[78] She perceived the aim of the Young Fabians to be to serve as the new governing elite which

[75] Cf. Rosalind Hyndman, *The Last Year of H. M. Hyndman* (London, 1923), p. 287.

[76] Margaret Cole, *The Story of Fabian Socialism* (Stanford, 1961), pp. 149. Also, p. 312; 'no age-census was ever taken' in this battle between the Old and the New, an interesting example of the repression by social scientists of the fact of generational conflict.

[77] Ibid. p. 148. Margaret Cole, *Growing Up Into Revolution* (London, 1949), pp. 63–65.

[78] Kitty Muggeridge and Ruth Adam, *Beatrice Webb: A Life, 1858–1943* (London, 1967), pp. 202–03.

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the socialist society would require; these callow youths were basically looking, she felt, for 'an opening and a career'.[79] She also recorded that they looked to socialism, as H. G. Wells had, 'with a glowing anticipation of promiscuity in sexual relations'.[80] Sexual promiscuity has, of course, been a platform of the revolutionary young much more frequently than of their elders. At any rate, in her vivid metaphor of the rebellious youths and maidens, seeking a public execution of the old, Beatrice Webb formulated an underlying reality in the New Socialism.

THIS reality was indeed the theme of the novel *Ann Veronica* (1909) by H. G. Wells which 'set the whole country in an uproar', and 'was the centre of one of the greatest literary battles that took place during that period'.[81] In a London which abounded in 'meetings and things', 'conferences and talks', in which Suffragettes and Tolstoyans vied with Fabians for the public ear, the heroine, Ann Veronica, first heard of the Fabians from her friend:

> 'It's *the* Society!' said Miss Miniver. 'It's the centre of the intellectuals. Some of the meetings are wonderful! Such earnest, beautiful women! Such deep-browed men! . . . And to think that they are making history! That they are putting together the plans of a new world . . .'
>
> 'But *are* the people going to alter everything?' said Ann Veronica.
>
> 'What else can happen?' asked Miss Miniver. 'What else can possibly happen as they are going now?'

A great originative revolution was the project of the young intellectuals. Ann found them at the Fabian meeting: 'The place was crowded and the people about her were almost equally made up of very good-looking and enthusiastic young people . . .' Later Ann's lover meditated on the generational source of revolution:

> 'There's a sort of instinct of rebellion,' said Capes. 'It isn't anything to do with our times particularly. People think it is, but they are wrong. It's to do with adolescence . . . It's a sort of home-leaving instinct . . .'
>
> 'There's another instinct, too,' he went on, 'in a state of suppression, . . .; a child-expelling instinct . . . I don't believe there is any strong natural affection at all between parents and growing-up children. There wasn't, I know, between myself and my father . . . I bored him. I hated him . . . Father-worshipping sons are abnormal—and they're no good. No good at all, . . . or what is the good of successive generations? Life is rebellion, or nothing.'
>
> 'Some day older people, perhaps will trouble to understand younger people, and there won't be these fierce disruptions; . . .'

[79] Ibid. p. 204.
[80] Ibid. p. 167.
[81] Antonina Vallentin, *H. G. Wells: Prophet of our Day*, tr. Daphne Woodward (New York, 1950), p. 168.

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The generational cleavage within the ranks of European socialism was probably a basic reason for its failure during the period after the first world war. It was largely responsible for the failure of communists to unite with the Social Democrats to halt Hitler's Nazis. Wherever a major division occurred on the continent between communists and socialists, it took place along generational lines—in Germany, in France, even in the United States. The Communist Parties were the parties of young intellectuals, young unemployed, young workers; the Socialist Parties were constituted of middle-aged workers, long-time members of established unions, and middle-aged professional men rather than young intellectuals. In 1921, a keen intellect, Walther Rathenau, Foreign Secretary of the German Republic, and shortly to be assassinated by a reactionary young activist, observed the generational cleavage between the Majority Socialists and the Left: 'To-day the Majority Socialists are in power, . . . This is composed of the older, trained and work-willing Trade Unionists, who are amazed at the Revolution, who do not regard it as quite legitimate, but who are determined to defend the status quo . . . The Left section consists of youths and of persons disgusted with militarism, ignorant of affairs but cherishing a certain independence of judgment . . . To these as a "forward" party, the doctrinaire theorists have allied themselves. The designation of the party "The Independents" is characteristic; its goal "All power to the Soviets" is a catchword from Russia.'[82] The Spartacists who in 1918 and 1919 pressed forward for armed revolution and a Soviet order were largely a youth which ignored the advice of their elders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht: 'the bulk were young uncompromising radicals, who wanted the constant warnings against any truck with the enemy translated into a complete personal break with all the coat-tails of society—and into action, above all action.'[83] They sought to realize directly the programme enunciated by Rosa Luxemburg: '"The agenda of world history reads to-day: Realization of the ultimate goal of Socialism."'[84] But whereas in Russia, the young soldiers in the Petrograd garrison felt they owed the war's end and their personal safety to Bolshevik success, in Germany the Revolution occurred after peace was an accomplished fact.[85] Soldiers then found their way more readily to the Militarist Right in civil war with the Left.

In Munich, a group composed mostly of young people made a revolution in 1918, and subsequently, a Munich Soviet Republic had a brief existence. Under the leadership of a socialist journalist, Kurt Eisner, a handful of soldiers joined with 'the *Oktoberfestelement*, that assortment of beer-hall perennials, Schwabing literati, students, miscellaneous women, and youngsters of all sizes which appears at every large public

[82] Walther Rathenau, *The New Society*, tr. Arthur Windham (London, 1921), pp. 55–56.
[83] J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg*, Vol. II (London, 1966), pp. 735–36. Also cf. Karl W. Meyer, *Karl Liebknecht: Man Without a Country* (Washington, 1957), pp. 149–70.
[84] Heinrich Ströbel, *The German Revolution and After*, tr. H. J. Stenning (London, 1923), p. 87, pp. 97–98.
[85] Ibid. pp. 73–74, 82–83.

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gathering on the Theresienweise', and essayed their qualitative leap in history, an originative revolution.[86] Their military commander for a while was the poet-student Ernst Toller. The Munich Revolution was a brief, pathetic political lyric to Utopia.

Then during the next years a German Communist Party became the party of the Left. The dominant Social Democratic Party had a middle-aged rank and file, faithful to the party institutions and traditions. Its leaders were men expressive of this image—older, stodgy men, Ebert, Scheidemann. The communist leaders, on the other hand, were youthful figures, young intellectuals from the middle class; in Berlin, the centre of the Left opposition, the three chief leaders, Ernst Reuter, Ruth Fischer, and Arkadi Maslow were young people; the oldest, the chairman Reuter was 31 years old; Ruth Fischer was twenty-five.[87] For more than a decade young communists fought their Marxist generational campaign against the older Social Democrats; Marxist idealism envenomed became discredited. Meanwhile a newer generation of the middle class became storm troopers, and followed Nazi slogans of unity and anti-Semitism.

THE movements of insurgence, of Lefts against Rights, in the history of labour movements have likewise invariably been founded on generational conflicts, with the young being drawn to originative visions of a novel world. Whenever a secession has occurred in the American labour movement, it has expressed, to a great extent, a generational schism. When the Industrial Workers of the World was organized in revolutionary, syndicalist protest against the craft-minded, cautious American Federation of Labour, it was a movement clearly weighted with generational rebellion. As late as its sixth annual meeting, in 1911, when 31 delegates convened from 11 states, 'a somewhat more successful convention', it was observed: 'Most of the delegates were young men full of the fire and enthusiasm of youth. "Intellectuals" were conspicuous by their absence.'[88] The IWW drew up a generational indictment of the craft unions denouncing them for excluding young workers through a variety of devices ranging from high initiation fees to forbidding apprenticeship regulations.[89]

Wherever the phenomenon of what Robert F. Hoxie called 'revolutionary unionism' has arisen, it has always been the expression of young workers.[90] The average member of an established trade union is apt to

[86] Alan Mitchell, *Revolution in Bavaria 1918–1919: The Eisner Regime and the Soviet Republic* (Princeton, 1965), p. 94.

[87] Werner T. Angress, *Stillborn Revolution: The Communist Bid for Power in Germany, 1921–1923* (Princeton, 1963), pp. 86, 90–91.

[88] Paul Frederick Brissenden, *The I.W.W.: A Study of American Syndicalism*, second ed. (New York, 1920), p. 267. Cited from B. H. Williams, 'The Sixth I.W.W. Convention', *International Socialist Review*, Vol. XII, November 1911, p. 302.

[89] Ibid. p. 185.

[90] 'Revolutionary unionism is in essence a spiritual something, a group viewpoint, a theory and interpretation of society and social relationships held by groups of militant wage workers, and an attempt to realize this theory and interpretation by means of a programme of action.' Robert Franklin Hoxie, *Trade Unionism in the United States*, second ed. (New York, 1923), p. 163.

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be, as Selig Perlman showed, more 'job-conscious' than class-conscious, more concerned with his wages and conditions of labour than with schemes for the total reconstruction of society. A revolutionary emotion prevails in a labour organization only when a new working class, literally young in years, is encountering conditions of 'exploitation'. Trace the history of any section of the working class, and this generalization is confirmed. In the garment industry of New York, for instance, among the Jewish working class, 'the origin of the left wing', writes Melech Epstein, 'is not to be traced to the men of Local 1, but to the girls and young men of the Ladies' Waist and Dressmakers' Union Local 25, the largest in the ILGWU'. Its Current Events Committee 'mirrored the yearnings of a number of young people for a "soul" in their union . . . The girls went to work carrying Karl Marx and Kropotkin under their arms.'[91] The 'uprising' of the twenty thousand, the strike of the shirt-waist makers, part of the Great Revolt of 1910, was a movement of young people; seventy per cent of them were between the ages of 16 and 25, deeply restless, tension-filled.[92] The Amalgamated Clothing Workers was born in a 'split' in 1914 of 'young radicals', predominantly Jewish, from the stodgy, old-aged United Garment Workers.[93] Later, among the Jewish workers themselves, the young provided a communist rank and file and leadership, while the middle-aged were democratic or moderate socialist. In the aftermath of the first world war, several thousand young men and women from Eastern Europe migrated to the United States: 'this group largely gravitated towards the communist movement'. They contributed to revolutionary unionism 'the same dynamic energy that the youth of the second mass immigration had infused into the radical movement in the decade between 1904 and 1914'.[94] The furriers in the period after the first world war were youthful and militant. 'Young radicals led the union', while 'a large proportion of young people who entered the fur trade came from Bessarabia and were known for their fighting spirit and physical strength'. The furriers' strike of 1920 was 'the most protracted in the history of Jewish labour'; it lasted for 32 weeks without the ranks giving way.[95] The efforts then made by the communists to acquire the control of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union were led by young newcomers.[96]

It was a younger generation of workers again who were the mainstay in the United States during the mid-thirties of the unprecedented drive of the Committee for Industrial Organization. 'The younger generation that now controls steel' was coming to the fore, noted an editor of *The*

[91] Melech Epstein, *Jewish Labor in U.S.A., 1914–1952*, Vol. II, p. 130.
[92] Ibid. Vol. I, p. 389. Also cf. Louis Levine, *The Women's Garment Workers* (New York, 1924), p. 144 ff.
[93] Melech Epstein, op. cit. Vol. II, pp. 41, 48.
[94] Ibid. p. 123.
[95] Ibid. Vol. II, p. 96.
[96] Ibid. Vol. II, pp. 134, 166.

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New Republic.[97] 'Both in rubber and automobiles the rank and file is young, enthusiastic, and militant', observed a reporter in *The Nation*.[98] Only the older men in the steel and maritime industries were recalcitrant to the new waves of organizing. The young moved ahead [99], 'during the last two years they had developed their own leaders, right from the belt line'.[1] Only a part of the new union recruits held to an outright revolutionary ideology, but wherever such emotions were strong, they were expressive of a new generational movement which sang of a new world with a gusto that had not been seen since the days of the IWW.

STUDENTS of the sociology of revolution have often affirmed that only an 'immature' working class is drawn by revolutionary emotion and ideology; such a working class is held not to have acquired the habits of industrial society; they are presumably not yet conditioned to, or attuned to, regular schedules of work with machines; they are allegedly still refractory to the machine discipline and factory organization. This theory is curiously the opposite to that of Thorstein Veblen who thought that the more conditioned a working class was to the industrial discipline, the greater the likelihood that its processes of thought, rendered more impersonally causal-minded, would lead it to a revolutionary outlook. But actually, habituation to the industrial discipline is scarcely crucial in determining whether workers will be revolutionary or not. What is important is their age. A working class, young in years, will be more apt in a crisis to take a revolutionary direction. The hillbillies newly arrived in the textile mills of Gastonia, North Carolina, 40 years ago were youngsters; therefore they fought with a militancy later enshrined in novels and songs. When Sidney and Beatrice Webb in 1898 visited Leadville, Colorado, a mining camp of 15,000 people, they found the miners were 'the backbone of the populists' wave',[2] having elected every office-holder, and succeeding in bringing anarchy to Leadville. The miners were young, itinerant labourers, ready to fight things out; the Wild West was a Young Wild West, and Eleanor Marx Aveling, touring the United States, thought that the cowboys were among the most exploited proletarians in America.[3] They probably were the youngest. Middle-aged men who have not known the industrial discipline, who are industrially immature, will nonetheless not tend to be socially militant; if

[97] George Soule, 'Labour's Decisive Victory', *The New Republic*, Vol. LXXXX, 17 March 1937, p. 155.

[98] Benjamin Stolberg, 'Big Steel, Little Steel, and the C.I.O.', *The Nation*, Vol. 145, 31 July 1937, p. 121.

[99] Rose M. Stein, 'Steel Lines Up for Battle', *The New Republic*, Vol. LXXIX, 20 June 1934, p. 147. William P. Mangold, 'On the Labour Front', *The New Republic*, Vol. LXXXIV, 14 August 1935, p. 20.

[1] Benjamin Stolberg, op. cit. p. 121. Mary Heaton Vorse, 'Organizing the Steel Workers', *The New Republic*, Vol. LXXXVIII, 12 August 1936, p. 13.

[2] *Beatrice Webb's American Diary: 1898*, ed. David A. Shannon (Madison, 1963), p. 124.

[3] Edward and Eleanor Marx Aveling, *The Working-Class Movement in America*, second ed. (London, 1891), p. 154 ff.

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anything, they will be the most cautious when they find themselves in a situation with a strike potential. It is not the 'internalization of industrial norms' which is the crucial factor in determining the behaviour of a working class; its biological age is far more significant.

REVOLUTIONARY regimes have always been aware of the close linkage between the revolutionary spirit and underlying emotions of generational rebellion. Consequently, whenever a revolutionary regime has sought to renew itself, it has unleashed the drives of generational resentment, channelling them against rival factions. Thus Joseph Stalin promoted those epidemics of informing and denunciation, 'in which son informed on father, and brother on brother'[4]; thus more recently Mao Tse-tung provided a national engine for the transmutation on a mass scale of the passions of generational hatred into a Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

To the degree furthermore that a revolutionary movement involves a new generational secession, with a novel ideology, the brethren of the movement will seek to address each other in distinctive ways, to signify the advent of a novel emotional bond. The French revolutionists imported the use of the word 'Citizen' from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, borrowing his pride in his status as a free citizen of the bourgeois city of Geneva. The appellation Citizen lasted through the years of the International Workingmen's Association, but in the 1880s when the new Second International was emerging, and a young generation of intellectuals were becoming socialists in England, the word 'Comrade', drawn from the exhilarating poetry of Walt Whitman, became the term of address. As W. Harrison Riley recalled: 'The Internationalists addressed each other as "Citizen", but I disliked the designation and frequently substituted Whitman's greeting "Comrade".[5] In such literary socialist grouplets in England as the Salt-Joynes-Carpenter circle, there was, as Bernard Shaw tells, 'no question of Henry George and Karl Marx but a good dealt of Walt Whitman and Thoreau', and this Whitmanesque enthusiasm was expounded in the Fabian Essays.[6] It was curious that the word 'Comrade', linked in usage to three homosexuals such as Whitman, Thoreau, and Carpenter, became the term to denote a political relationship which in the intensity of its bond was often felt to be superior to that of the family.[7] In later years, as the concept evolved, Ignazio Silone was to brood that as a member of the party he had comrades but no friends, but that was a time when the comrades were

[4] Leonid Vladimirov, *The Russians* (New York, 1968), p. 615.

[5] W. Harrison Riley, 'Reminiscences of Karl Marx', *The Comrade*, Vol. III, No. 1, October 1903, p. 5. Walt Whitman became accepted by Socialists as 'our party poet'. *Cf.* Floyd Dell, 'Walt Whitman, Anti-Socialist', *New Review*, Vol. III, 15 June 1915, pp. 85–86.

[6] Philip Henderson, *William Morris: His Life, Work, and Friends* (London, 1967), p. 247. William Clarke, in *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, ed. George Bernard Shaw (reprinted, Boston, 1911), p. 92.

[7] Harold Blodgett, *Walt Whitman in England* (Ithaca, 1934), pp. 205, 212–13.

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devouring each other. In our time, the New Left, differentiating themselves from the 'Comrades' of the Old Left, address one another as 'Brothers', deriving their usage not from the American trade unionists or lodge members, but from the black revolutionaries.

LASTLY, a rather unusual theorem follows from the generational basis of the impulse for originative revolution. No revolutionary party, with originative goals, survives beyond one generation to the next, unless, having achieved a seizure of power, it becomes the ruling party. Each revolutionary party is the vehicle of one political generation; if the latter fails to achieve victory, its ideological legacy and organization will fail to satisfy the next generation; the latter will want to fashion its own ideology and organization, to be master of its own house. The old revolutionists, unsuccessful, find their revolutionary ardour diminishing as they pass from youth to middle age; their old arguments begin to sound hollow to themselves; the emotional urge to martyrdom itself acquires the aspect of an insincere stance. The Russian-English Bolshevik F. A. Rothstein observed, as Ivan Maisky recalled, that 'by the beginning of the 20th century almost all the surviving *Narodovoltsy* had become ordinary liberals'.[8] Aaron Zundelevich, whose heroic deeds made him the model for the revolutionary protagonist in a novel by Stepniak, became 'a typical "Labour" man, and not very left-wing at that. In all his thoughts, feelings and opinions, he seemed to be saying: "Why all this unnecessary excitement and impatience? Life goes its own remorseless way. It cannot be hurried. One must wait and hope for the best and meanwhile get on with the daily round and common task."'[9] The student terrorist, Peter Karpovich, who had killed a Minister of Public Instruction in 1901, saw his passion for terrorism diluted by the time he was approaching 40; in 1917, in British exile, he acted the chief part in a comedy-farce performed under the auspices of the Herzen Circle; the play was 'all about the misfortunes at college of an overgrown ninny'. Karpovich played it with such brilliance 'that he kept his audience in fits of laughter'.[10] Perhaps there was an underlying identity between the revolutionary actor and the stage actor, which the passage of a few years made explicit; in the course of that process, a revolutionary ingredient evaporated.

A revolutionary party, unsuccessful in one generation, never revives. Though it may continue to exist in a formal sense, it fails to attract a sufficient number of recruits from the next generation. Insofar as it survives, it becomes a sect; the evolutionary path is then from party to sect. The Socialist Party of America from 1900 to 1917, for instance, achieved a significant rise in votes, municipal victories, and influence among intellectuals. Then its fortunes ebbed. With the advent of the depression in 1929, it was widely believed that the Socialist Party, its

[8] Ivan Maisky, *Journey into the Past*, tr. Frederick Holt (London, 1962), p. 125.
[9] Ibid. p. 124.
[10] Ibid. p. 132.

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doctrine having been vindicated, would undergo a renaissance; it never really did, for there are no generational renaissances for middle-aged revolutionary parties. Some young recruits joined the party; they tried hard, as Militants, to differentiate themselves from the Old Guard, magnifying their ideological differences. 'The Old Guard leaders could have been the grandfathers of some of their opponents. But even when an actual generation did not separate the groups, a party generation did', writes their historian.[11] The overwhelming number of new revolutionists, however, were drawn toward the Communist Party, with its new revolutionary art, new names, new plans for organizing and no burden of defeated elders. Among the intellectuals, the leading supporters of the communist presidential candidate in 1932 were predominantly drawn from the younger as those of the socialist candidate were from the older generation. Finally, in another era, after the intervening decline of the Communist Party, there came the phenomenon in the 1960s of the New Left. It brought with it, however, no revival of the Communist Party. That remained an organization of revolutionary alumni; the undergraduates, graduate students, and junior intellectuals generally went experimenting in Maoism, Guevaraism, pornopolitics, psychedelic politics, and neo-tribalism. Revolutionary leftists, emerging as they did in generational revolt, sought once more their own revolutionary style and idiom. Lenin's texts against infantile leftism did not speak a language congenial to the new-born left.

[11] David A. Shannon, *The Socialist Party of America: A History* (New York, 1955), pp. 213–14.

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Violence from Below

Manès Sperber

WE are living in a period which, according to widely held views, is marked by a tremendous upsurge of violence. Violence has spread throughout society, and it seems to have become the characteristic means by which the young seek to assert themselves in their conflict with the older generation. Television, newspapers and radio seem to impress on us almost without pause that any serious improvement in social and political conditions depends on the ruthless use of violence. That is said to apply especially to Latin America and Asia and, generally, to all countries where the people are suffering from hunger and repression; and it is alleged to apply with even greater force to the liberation of the underprivileged or altogether disfranchised races.

People exposed to the daily screening of photogenic acts of terrorism are driven to believe that the time is out of joint and that the preachers of violence and the organizers of wild rebellions must first conquer power throughout the world before it can hope to regain its balance. The mass media focus our attention relentlessly on destruction of every kind, on abductions and the killing of hostages, and such incessant displays expose the unadmitted weakness of established authority to the eyes of even the most conformist citizen.

The task of examining the causes, aims and effects of purposive violence would thus seem to have an urgent topicality. That, however, was not the reason why I chose to write on this theme. It so happens that I do not even believe that, in proportion to the rapid growth of the world population in the last few centuries (despite world wars, revolutions and counter-revolutions), the world is today faced by more violence than in the past. In fact, incredible though this may seem, the bloody traces, which, like well-worn paths, have during thousands of years marked the highways and byways of human settlements, have actually grown fainter because private and criminal violence in everyday life has relatively declined.

All occasions, festivities as well as quarrels, were formerly marked by violence. In committing acts of violence, men furnished visible proof that they were able to escape from servitude for hours on end by using their muscular strength, not for slave labour, but for playing and quarrelling. In the quarters of the poor, hardly a weekend passed without senseless acts of destruction with which men amused themselves during their time off in the alehouses or the alley ways. At night time, drunken men fathered too many children, during the day, they provoked one another to brawls which often ended in death. Even in the most civilised cities of Europe, life after dark was not safe, and hardly anybody dared to leave the guarded settlements without adequate protection.

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Non-violent violence

Man, who is capable of feeling anxiety and fear, is just as capable of committing acts of violence and, as the case may be, of either yielding to the urge to violence or else checking and concealing it. The urge to violence has its origin, not in a surplus of energy, nor in a sense of superiority, nor yet in a confidence in victory, but, on the contrary in the oppressive feeling of being threatened by violence. This feeling arises first as an extreme reaction to inescapable physical phenomena. The birth trauma, i.e. the after-effect of the process of birth, which, according to psychoanalytical opinion, invariably lingers on, would thus be the very first experience of being helplessly in the grip of a violent and superior power.

In the course of the process during which the human being learns to express his desire and disgust in articulate words, his body movements and facial expressions lose their former vehemence, and the gestures of violence lose their meaning—except, of course, in situations in which he believes that he must defend himself. (The once famous French author Lucien Descaves writes in a novel of two Breton recruits who met in their barracks. Forbidden to talk to each other in their own language, the only one which they both knew, they acquired the habit of keeping contact by bumping into one another or by hitting each other until their mute dialogues degenerated into violent brawls.) Words form links even over a distance, and at the same time enable men to quarrel without coming to blows.

The similar, albeit destructive, distancing effect of firearms modifies violence psychologically as well as transforming it tactically and strategically. In order to stab someone with a knife, man must come close to his would-be victim and cannot easily conceal his identity; he thus runs a possible risk. By contrast, when a marksman, from behind a window, shoots at an innocent passer-by or a Head-of-State on parade, he has no more contact with his victim than he would have with a clay pigeon. As the weapons become more murderous, the participation of the psyche in the act of destruction becomes correspondingly weaker. No matter what moralising psychologists, sociologists and journalists may have maintained or—as, for instance, in the case of the US pilot Eatherly—invented, man can effortlessly press a button, which releases an atom bomb capable of annihilating an entire city, without having the slightest feeling that he is committing an act of violence. Or, to put it in another way—if a person slapped someone's face or broke a window pane, he would be involved in much greater psychical violence than the pilot who merely pressed a button, a mechanical movement which remains the same irrespective of whether the button regulates the plane's air supply, summons a stewardess or causes indescribable devastation. Technical progress, which enables man to remove mountains by detonation without muscle strain, also enables him without psychical strain, i.e. *without evoking an urge to violence*, to

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annihilate far more than an army bent on destruction would ever have dared or wished to destroy in enemy territory. This new potentiality of a *psychically non-violent* act, which nevertheless results in immeasurable *destruction,* could in certain conditions dwarf the provocative, psychically overloaded gesture of physical violence by bestowing on it a new aura of comparative harmlessness.

Violence as compensation

Self-defence is the plea of men who commit an act of violence in order to ward off a dangerous threat or who kill in order to survive. In some cases such a plea is justified by actual circumstances; more often it is unjustified; many people feel themselves threatened even when they are not. Anxiety induces them to misinterpret a harmless gesture as the beginning of an attack. Paranoiac distrust, as by some evil magic, turns passers-by or irritable companions into enemies whom one must anticipate in self-defence. In such cases, the will to violence must be regarded as an attempt at the compensatory conquest of a more or less admitted feeling of anxiety.

Violence which, on the contrary, seems to emanate from a sense of superiority is a rarer phenomenon, but it also deserves attention. The aggressor in such cases is tempted by the helplessness of his potential victims as soon as he discovers how easily, and without danger to himself, he can oppress weaker people, exploit them, humiliate them or even exterminate them. There can be no doubt that many a killer in the concentration camps committed his crimes against wholly defenceless prisoners for the simple reason that it was so easy for him to do so and that he was running no risks. Closer examination reveals, however, that, even in the case of such evil-doers, the need to express their superiority in acts of violence stems, in the last analysis, from anxiety and from a poorly and all too patently disguised feeling of inferiority. This explains, for instance, why prison guards most often selected people for special maltreatment and humiliations who could be identified as intellectuals or as members of a higher social class. I remember some prison guards with whom I had come into contact regarding it as an intolerable provocation that I had dared to bring a parcel of books along. They raged as though the prisoner had intended to threaten or at the very least to humiliate them with his books.

Man can feel himself being doubted, degraded or endangered without having been actually threatened or challenged. The complexity of this problem stems from the often inextricable entanglement of actual events and developments with their subjective interpretation. It is thus possible for people to fear that they might drown in their bathtub even though they feel completely secure bathing amidst the breakers of the ocean. It is possible for someone to be frightened at night by the shadow of his coat hanging over the back of a chair, but to show presence of mind and act courageously in the face of a real and correctly perceived mortal danger.

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What are man's inner sensations at the moment at which he becomes aggressive in words or in deed? He feels a sudden upsurge of excitement which, irrepressibly and with unusual rapidity, reaches an extreme of intensity; his feeling is an experience of power, the sensation of having suddenly grown to the full height of his potentialities and of being able to make full use of the whole momentum of his latent strength. It seems justifiable to compare this experience to the feeling accompanying an orgasm. Psychoanalysts conclude from this that violence is a libidinous function which in every instance requires a sexual interpretation, and they specially stress in this context the significance of sadistic actions. I believe that this interpretation is mistaken even though the comparison on which it is based seems justified. Although both the orgasm and the act of violence produce a maximum of intensity of feeling, they do so because both situations evoke a similar sensation of concentrated power—in the moment, that is, in which this power is discharged and spends itself. Whenever a man uses violence against his adversary in order to reduce him to a state of helplessness and impotence, he feels superior, god-like. Yet, if you watch his face attentively, you will be surprised to discover that, like the face of a baby in a fit of convulsions, it expresses at one and the same moment untameable violence and overpowering anguish. Thus he experiences his own frenzy as innocence running amok under the shock of humiliation.

Violence—the midwife of history?

There is no need to discuss here the effects of violence on personal relations, within one's family or one's circle of colleagues. But there is the problem of the function of violence in conflicts between tribes, nations, religions, classes and generations. Marx's assertion that history is a history of class struggles was, as even Lenin admitted, wholly unoriginal. It was known long before Marx that the development of mankind could not be understood unless one took account of the incessant conflicts in which various groups, especially religious and social groups, struggled against one another for superiority and domination. Situations without conflict lasted for only very short periods of time which were mere intervals or constituted transitions from one contest to the next. Here is one reason why the messianic utopia gives such pride of place to the promise of eternal and universal peace.

It is again fashionable to believe in man's inborn aggressiveness. Those who share this belief do not merely regard violence as the motor of history, but also look on the prevalence of violence as a paramount consideration. As can be gathered from everything said so far, this is a view which I do not share. Is violence the midwife of history? Marx made such a remark, and so argued, before him, some of the thinkers of antiquity. Still, it is quite wrong to think that Marx believed that violence has a *formative* function in history. For Marx, the development of history resulted from the process of progressive change in the pro-

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ductive forces and the concomitant modification of the relations of production and the formation of classes. In contrast to many other—especially conservative and anarchist—thinkers, Marx attached little or no significance to violent actions leading to the usurpation of power, *coups de main* and *coups d'état*.

That much can be gathered from Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, and his other essays on the civil wars in France. Applying his general principles to his own writings on contemporary history, he indicated the need to look behind the headline events, the startling actions and sensational crimes so as to discern the basic conditions and the forces of social development giving rise to the prevailing conditions. For Marx, historical meaning, i.e. the real meaning of political events, is exclusively tied to the motor forces of social development. It is not only the Marxist interpretation of history which regards violence as *merely one* among many instruments employed and employable in the contests in which groups of every description—classes, nations, states and churches—face one another to promote their development. Only one among many instruments, I would like to stress, and not the most effective nor, except in the rarest of circumstances, the decisive instrument, nor ever the formative factor of history even when it is a question of war or peace.

True, there are phases in the history of every authoritarian institution, especially the state, in which violence as a threat or a fact is meant to make an immediate impact on the course of events. Such *dramatization* explains why so many writers tend to regard all institutions as mere end results, as the net gain, so to speak, made from successfully employed violence. This applies especially to the achievements of victorious revolutions which, in any case, are usually proclaimed in advance as total and violent transformations. On closer inspection, however, this seemingly self-evident and common-sense concept of revolutions turns out to be wrong in most, if not perhaps in all cases.

When precisely did the French Revolution achieve its victory? After the storming of the Bastille? After 4 August 1789 when the nobles renounced their privileges? After the execution of the King? During the final wave of terror under Robespierre? None of this makes sense, for precisely that period led to the Thermidor and eventually, by way of the Directory, to the Empire, which dragged the whole of Europe into war, then carried the war into Africa and Asia until, in the end, there remained a France, defeated and bled white, which lived on as a kingdom for another 33 years before subjecting itself once again, after a second and a third revolution, to another Emperor. Only after the war lost by Louis Bonaparte did the Republic become a durable institution—80 years after the Great Revolution.

Even if the perpetrators of violence look upon it as triumph and its victims experience it as humiliation or annihilation, violence serves in essence as the trumpet blast announcing something that either does not come or, if it does, rapidly disappears again. Real revolutions, which in-

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volve deep and lasting changes, are not the work of dramatic explosions and convulsions covering a few short days, weeks or even years; real revolutions usually take the form of slow developments which, as already noted, transform the productive forces, the mode of production and thereby the relations of production, that is to say, the *conditions* in which men, generation upon generation, seek to make their existence continuous and meaningful. Men who adhere to the dramatic concept of history must for instance believe that the Russian Revolution of 7 November 1917 achieved its purpose after the Winter Palace in Petrograd had been stormed and the Provisional Government had been put to flight. But that is a picture-book version which can be given artistic form by an Eisenstein or a Pudovkin, but which has nothing in common with history and historical interpretation. To be sure, the events of that night had a symbolic significance; yet they constituted the beginning of a four-year-long, unprecedentedly murderous civil war, which brought the country to the brink of economic and social ruin and delivered it into the hands of a dictatorship which still survives—55 years after the 'victory' of the workers' and peasants' democracy which the revolutionaries had originally planned.

Certainly, in the period since the storming of the Winter Palace, Russia has undergone many profound changes. But these changes owe less to revolution than to technical developments, especially the industrialization of nearly all branches of production. One could of course argue that, without revolutionary violence and civil war, this industrial transformation would not have been brought about. But this is an assertion which cannot be proved and which seems all the more dubious as Tsarist Russia's rate of industrial growth between 1880 and 1913 was second only to that of the USA. Moreover, since 1917 countless other countries have become highly industrialized without the prior or simultaneous use of violence. On the other hand, there are states in which violence has become the rule and where, for decades on end, one *coup d'état* has followed another without giving rise to changes in actual *conditions*. This applies to most states in Latin America and the Middle East where *coups d'état* have remained the rule rather than the exception.

None of this means that violence is invariably senseless and ineffective. What I have hoped to indicate is rather that many of the currently fashionable ideas of violence belong to the realm of legend, the endlessly repeated legend which presents violence as the motor of total transformation and the sole source of salvation. For violence hardly ever achieves its aims or, if for once it appears to have done so, it almost immediately becomes divorced from its ostensible aims so that the latter fade away. Thus, after 7 November 1917, Lenin had to look on as the classless society disappeared like a haze further and further into the distance, and the establishment of a workers' state, in which he believed unshakeably, became, with the passage of time and the increasing use of violence, more and more of a chimera. For *violence is inescapably compelled to beget violence*. Of course, Lenin and Trotsky, to say nothing of Maxim

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Gorky and like-minded men, would have wished to do without violence from 8 November onwards. Small wonder; the victors are always in a peaceful mood—so long as their war booty remains safe, so long as they obtain retrospective approval for all their views and actions and so long as, henceforth, everyone is ready to submit without resistance. Yet the very triumph of the victors convinces the vanquished that only violence offers a chance of resisting and of transforming triumph into defeat. One can only conclude that the history of the human species is made up of a series of victories which, as soon as the basic conditions reassert themselves, prove to have been essentially hollow. For all the deafening shrillness of the short-lived sound and fury, the only real achievements of human effort and sacrifice are preserved in transformations which affect actual conditions and which are capable of being de-dramatized and being turned into everyday life.

Compulsion to violence

There is yet another kind of violence; the violence which is the last resort of the oppressed after they have ceased to hope that there is any other way of exposing the wrongs continually done to them or of making their rulers understand that conditions have become unbearable. What is involved in such cases is not necessarily a revolution but, more often, a *revolt*—the ultimate choice of men to suffer death rather than continue to tolerate oppression and exploitation.

The wrongs inflicted by the oppressor produce conflicting feelings in his victims. Having suffered a blow, they get discouraged and tend to submit; yet, soon afterwards, the same blow induces daydreams of rebellion against the wrong they have suffered. For a considerable time such conflicting reactions tend to cancel one another out. What determines the moment when rebellion replaces humble submission? This moment does not arrive until man has reached a stage at which he begins to prefer anything, including death, to the existing state of affairs. This quasi-suicidal impulse, which forms one of the facets of justified rebellions, explains the savageness of the uprisings of the slaves, the recklessness of the *jacqueries* and the cruelties of revolutionary vengeance. He who risks his life for a cause has no time for pity, for he has become pitiless towards himself. His conviction of the moral justification for acts of violence, which are committed for causes beyond one's own narrow and personal interests, is as unshakeable as that of men who believe that they owe their power and wealth to the will and grace of God.

The world has always known revolts, and it knows them today. They are morally and—often even in the event of their defeat—politically justified wherever and whenever the violence of the ruler leaves the ruled no chance of struggling *legally* and effectively for changes capable of endowing life at long last with value and dignity. But what are the prospects of violence used for such purposes? That, too, depends on the

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prevailing *conditions*, and by no means on the degree of violence, on the ruthlessness of its use or the technical means of destruction. By way of example, one need only recall the peasant rebellions before and during the Reformation which, without exception, were drowned in blood. Palace revolutions, by contrast, have a reasonable chance of success just because they reflect conflicts within cliques, which, morally, culturally and in other respects, are practically indistinguishable from one another.

Revolts, in contrast to palace revolutions, can turn into genuine revolutions and actually succeed only if and when they have social depth, if and when, that is, they represent the injured or long-neglected interests of large and socially important classes of people. In such a case, the act of rebellion sooner or later provokes within the ruling class doubts about its own legitimacy and induces some of the sons of the ruling class to defect to the cause of the rebels. So far, there has been hardly any victorious revolution in which defectors have not played an outstanding part as leaders.

How should such acts of class-betrayal be interpreted? Even those who believe that a psychological interpretation of history is methodologically wrong and, in any case, unsatisfactory must nevertheless resort to individual psychology for an interpretation of specific acts of this kind. The theory of the Oedipus complex does not provide a sufficient explanation, but it has its uses. The conflict between the generations is as inevitable as growth and death. No matter how much the form and content of this conflict may change in the course of history, the younger generation must always oppose and eventually take over the authority of the older generation. In certain historical situations, the generation conflict becomes enriched, so to speak, by class or status struggles. Whenever a conflict grows beyond the usual kind of family quarrel, it provides the sons of both the ruling class and the intermediate classes with a new vision of the future—a future which would no longer depend on their family but only on themselves.

For a defector of this kind, violence in an alliance with the oppressed becomes, for psychological reasons, an irresistible temptation. He needs violence just because his opponents are nearly as close to him as he is to himself. No alienation is as radical as that which has been produced by an irreparable action, such as for example a murder. That was appreciated by the sons of the noblemen and the privileged intellectuals of the Convention when they insisted that Louis XVI must be beheaded. Once a royal head had been sent rolling, they believed, France would become unable ever again to tolerate a king.

Yet what is at stake here is neither the ideology nor the political action of the defectors, but the thirst for violence which overcomes those who live continuously under the pressure of repressive measures and are thus driven to seek refuge in wish-fulfilment: one day, for a whole hour, everything will be reversed; the degraders will be humiliated; the torturers will be tortured; the guilty will be annihilated. This, more

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clearly than the terror phase of a revolution, reveals the partly hidden process in which violence calls forth violence and suffering stimulates the desire to inflict suffering.

The logic of violence

These reflections lead up to the conclusion that violence is on the whole to be condemned, but that there are certain circumstances in which it must be justified. In practice, everyone actually opts for one side or the other—either for the rulers who commit acts of violence whenever they think this is required for the preservation of their power and their privileges, or else for the victims of a still enduring past who are risking their all in their challenge to established authority and the struggle for their own rights. The latter kind of violence, which in its origin is purely *reactive*, usually puts an apparent or real end to a long period of passive submission and self-estrangement. It tends to be justified by both the intolerable conditions of the present and the immeasurable hopes aroused by the prospect of their abolition. He who employs violence in the name of the future can do so almost without setting any kind of limits to its exercise; for he takes it for granted that, once victory has been achieved, violence will become superfluous. The greatest deception, in which both religious and secular leaders have been involved and which has become an ever-recurring refrain of history, is their promise of a future which has to be wrested from the present by unrestricted violence so that thereafter peace, liberty, equality and human brotherhood will reign for all eternity.

When Fidel Castro and his friends established their guerrilla base in the mountains of Cuba, they were almost certainly convinced that their victory would lead not only to the overthrow of the dictator, but also to the re-establishment of a full-blown democracy, complete with legally guaranteed liberties for all and free elections for a constituent assembly. The elections have never been held, and there are at present thousands of political prisoners in Cuba's jails. All the same, there was no reason to doubt Castro's sincerity, just as there was, earlier, no reason to doubt that Lenin and Trotsky had not in fact planned in advance to act as they did, when they dispersed the newly elected constituent assembly in order to create a regime in which all power would be in the hands, not of the Soviets, but of a single party, while all other parties would end up in prison.

This poses a crucial question. Is it inevitable, in fact if not in theory, that violence in the event of victory should negate the very ends for which it was originally employed simply because the victors now exercise power instead of abolishing it? One may of course answer this question by citing the so-called *logic of struggle* according to which violence changes *en route* from a means into an end. This, it has often been noted, applies to power generally, including constitutionally established power, which can normally maintain itself without the use of

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violence and thus without a breach of its own rules. There are all sorts of explanations for the bewildering transformation of an originally 'pure' violence into depraved violence; yet none of these explanations is really satisfactory.

The make-believe of violence

The old German rhyme 'and if you will not be my brother, I'll bash your head in' expresses the kind of tempting threat to which terrorists resort in order to safeguard themselves. They do not feel secure unless and until they have won the complete and, indeed, the enthusiastic support of all the 'liberated' people. This is a fundamental rule which has also its reverse side: he who fails to give unconditional support is an enemy. And, almost needless to add, everyone is an enemy who has already been wronged. How can the tyrant be expected to trust his victims in view of the fact that he knows from his own experience that every victim is bound to dream of revenge? There are thus always at least two motives at work which help to transform violence from a means into an end. One of these motives, which can be most clearly demonstrated by an analysis of the tyrant, is the strange but irrepressible need of victorious terrorists for unconditional recognition and, if possible, even for love. Lacking the legitimacy which either birth or free elections could bestow, the victorious terrorists need, in addition to ideological fictions, a charisma which they believe can be enforced. The second motive derives from the totalitarian logic which bases itself on the immutable polarization of the 'He who is not with me is against me'. This dreadful line from the Gospels excludes the whole wide realm in which men live their actual lives—namely *between* the extremes.

Wherever an originally 'pure' violence from below is at work, these two psychological mainsprings are supplemented—and complicated—by additional historical and sociological motives. Whenever man opts for violence in the interest of the people, of the masses, he slides swiftly and almost without noticing it into a position of isolation, which is unwanted but unavoidable and which keeps him apart from the very masses in whose name he claims to act. Whatever their politics and ideology and whatever the arguments advanced in justification of their actions, the victorious terrorists must sooner or later discover that they have become an elite, and it is in their capacity as an elite that they lay claim to the right arbitrarily to make and break laws. That is a development fraught with grave consequences. Vilfredo Pareto has convincingly demonstrated that every society, no matter how it is organized or what the specific nature of its class structure, has an elite which governs, which prepares and enforces decisions, and which creates and changes fashions. The open or disguised struggle between those who belong to the elite and the many others who do not but who want to belong to it is, especially in critical periods, one of the key features of politics. In genuinely

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revolutionary periods the struggle is admittedly directed against *all* authority irrespective of the particular elite which is in charge. The Marxist programme accordingly proclaims that, after a short interim dictatorship of the proletariat, all classes and eventually the state itself would be abolished—even though, in actual practice, no ruling communist party which seized power in the name of Marxism has implemented a 'dictatorship of the proletariat', to say nothing of allowing the state to 'wither away'. Power in the communist-ruled countries has instead fallen into the hands of an elite which, for the most part, is made up of the party bureaucracy.

But do the original leaders who raised themselves from their former low state in order to challenge the mighty to a life and death struggle—do these leaders regard themselves as an elite? One would be inclined to answer this question in the negative. Yet they are men who, in contrast to the seemingly indifferent masses, defied death in order to change the course of history; as members of an unusually unselfish and self-sacrificing minority they could not but develop a heightened sense of their own value. These psychological circumstances explain why it has always been so surprisingly easy, notably in times of crisis, to gather conspirators into a tight community bound together for good and evil. No matter whether the conspirators are revolutionary idealists, power-seeking rivals, political intriguers or a mob of gangsters—they inevitably transform themselves, in every case, into an *aristocracy of violence* that arrogates to itself privileges which, if they were to be generally distributed, would make it impossible for men to live together.

This aristocracy derives its sense of superiority from the sensational impact of its acts of violence rather than from their effective long-term consequences. The man who, as from an ambush, perfidiously exploits and destroys that unquestioned mutual confidence that is the basis of all social relations may in fact for a brief time feel like a demi-god, and he may despise his victims, not only because they are defenceless, but also because they are ready to capitulate. As a matter of fact, there are people who not only fear kidnappers and air pirates, but who positively admire them— for a few hours or days, they occupy the very centre of world interest. But it is all quite pointless. Acts of violence do not prove anything new, nor do they modify existing problems or contribute to their solution. They are, so to speak, *postures in action*. The threats and the killings are, admittedly, real enough; even so what it all amounts to is a mere spectacle, a murderous make-believe.

The violence of the guerrillas

Can one, however, really speak of a mere spectacle when guerrillas make successful raids on state offices, radio stations, banks or even army barracks? Do not such actions prove that there is something rotten in the state? Or, more precisely, do they not prove that such

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a vulnerable regime is incapable of maintaining law and order within its own frontiers and of safeguarding, say, a Minister against abduction and murder? Watching the television screen, one could hear leaders of the Quebec separatists boasting that, after the abduction of M. Pierre Laporte, the bankruptcy of the Canadian state had been visibly demonstrated so that there was now nothing for it to do but capitulate. A few hours later, the government proclaimed a state of emergency, after which order was rapidly restored, and 'repressive tolerance' made way for repressive intolerance. One of the easiest things which a band of terrorists can accomplish in a free democracy is to abduct someone, to torture him or to kill him. It is easy just because in such societies we live as if the rules of the game were applied by everybody and as if, under the protection of the rules, children could unconcernedly play in the park and we could quietly go about even at night, unarmed and unprotected and still without fear of being assaulted. Acts of terror from below have become easy just because modern civilization has largely succeeded in eliminating violence from our everyday existence.

It is not accidental that dictatorial, especially totalitarian countries hardly ever experience the kind of attempts on heads-of-state which, in free countries, can succeed all too easily. Neither Hitler nor Stalin, nor their henchmen, had to live in constant fear of attempts on their lives. It is almost exclusively in democratic countries, that is to say in environments securing considerable freedom of movement and of manoeuvre, that violent student manifestations occur, which are specifically designed to provoke reprisals and thereby—as their participants believe—to expose the repressive character of the state. It is easy to understand why, by contrast, the purposive student movement of Czechoslovakia, which prolonged the Prague spring even under the threat of the Russian tanks, has meanwhile been brought to a halt. It will revive only when freedom has been given a fresh chance.

Another example: In Mexico. the government countered an assault by armed students, not with rubber truncheons and tear gas, but with a fusillade which killed many of the demonstrators; thus the whole action ended abruptly, with consequences which still persist.

Should all this lead one to the conclusion that violence from below can be quickly and easily stopped if the government steps in immediately with severe counter-measures? In many cases such a conclusion would indeed be correct. The situation may, however, be different in areas where violence from below enjoys the support of a majority of the population and thus gradually acquires a legitimacy of its own—the legitimacy of the tomorrow. This applies especially to Africa. The men who govern there today originally engaged in violence when they struggled for the national independence of their peoples, and they did so then not merely for their own psychological reasons. By now, however, *coup d'état* follows on *coup d'état*, with the result that dictatorial cliques supersede one another in the manner of the Latin American

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juntas which, in recent years often justify their repeated coups with the arguments of leftist ideologies. In all these cases, the legitimacy which had been gained during the underground struggle in times of weakness has begun to decay.

Everybody has become familiar with the legend of the guerrilla movement and with the handsome face of its patron saint, the late Che Guevara. Nowhere has the hopelessness, the political, psychical and physical misery of the guerrillas been described more trenchantly than in Che Guevara's 'Bolivian Diary'. Yet revolutionary youths all over the world continue to worship this bold fighter and make him their model hero even though his activities were indissolubly bound up with failures and defeats. As Castro's Minister, Guevara played a decisive part in ruining Cuba's economy. And it was he who invented the strategy according to which—for the sake of the 'two or three or more Vietnams'—the guerrillas in Bolivia were expected to furnish the decisive first impulse for a revolutionary civil war spreading throughout Latin America. The contrast between Guevara's actual achievements and his worldwide glorification demonstrates in an exemplary fashion that violence is occasionally capable of making a dramatic impact on peoples' minds, that it can produce melodramatic thrills and evoke admiration, but that its effect on *existing conditions* is at best temporary—an effect felt not by the peasants of Bolivia, but by the middle-class students of Berkeley and Berlin.

One could of course try to meet these arguments with the objection that violence played an important part in the overseas anti-colonialist movements which did achieve victory. However, paradoxical though this may sound, the imperial powers had to abandon their colonies in their own interests, and, for all their chauvinism and their imperialist self-deception, decolonization was a necessity which could not be postponed for long. Great Britain's withdrawal from nearly all its former colonies was in hardly any instance enforced by violence. By the early 1950s it had already become plain that the economies of the imperial powers, far from being endangered by decolonization, actually threw off a burden and thus became free to participate in Europe's prosperity. For the emancipation of the colonial peoples, violence was thus in a great many cases unnecessary or came too late—provided, that is, one thinks in military or political terms, for the above does not necessarily apply psychologically.

Among the most revealing exceptions are the Union of South Africa and Rhodesia. Unaided by Britain and without the slightest regard for British public opinion, the White settlers are determined to maintain their power and their wealth in these territories which they have come to regard as their homelands. Untroubled as they are by doubts about their legitimacy or by pangs of conscience, they ruthlessly suppress even the most insignificant attempts on the part of the African population at organising a resistance movement. One should not conclude from this that the oppressed people must therefore renounce

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violence; but it helps to explain why violence must remain largely ineffective so long as the overwhelming majority of the Whites remains immune from the temptation of even a merely moral complicity with the Blacks. *Without complicity from above, violence from below tends to exhaust itself in a desperate protest which starts as a whirlwind and fades out as a whimper.*

Algeria, too, had its settlers. Accounting for some 10 per cent of the population, they were mostly farmers, artisans and civil servants—second or third generation immigrants. They insisted that their homeland should remain a French *Département* because they feared—rightly, as it turned out—that they would otherwise lose Algeria. Does that mean that the FLN defeated the French army and thereby proved the efficaciousness of violence from below? There is no simple answer to this question. Undoubtedly, had it not been for the armed challenge, France would have been able to remain in Algeria for much longer. In fact, as late as 1956 or later still, the majority of Frenchmen still believed that they must hold on to Algeria at all costs. In the end the confrontation with organized violence convinced Paris that it was pointless to involve France in economic ruin and to court world disapproval, all the more so as it was not all that difficult to settle the million Europeans from Algeria in Metropolitan France. Gaullist France did not withdraw because it had been defeated by the FLN; it withdrew because, for all its chauvinistic rhetoric and all its imperialist mythology, it regarded it as senseless to go on fighting for a territory which with every passing day became more of a burden.

Too much or too little violence?

I have mentioned the colonial question because even determined opponents of terror tend to look with understanding, if not necessarily with approval, upon the use of violence in the struggle for the liberation of disfranchised people. But in the context of Western society, the alleged efficaciousness of violence is a mere legend. The Western world, especially American and European universities, has been repeatedly turned into a testing ground for violence from below. But is it meaningful to speak of violence *from below* when students burn down stores, explode bombs, destroy other people's (not their own) cars and attack defenceless people such as university teachers? And is such violence, which may count on such a large measure of complicity, victorious?

I might as well begin by recalling that student violence in Europe is nothing new. For centuries students have, during certain periods, terrorized their neighbourhoods and committed armed assaults just for the fun of it or in order to rob and kill. Religious, political or other justifications for that sort of thing were always at hand. In the nineteenth century, however, when the European nations fought for their civil and national liberty—especially in 1848, but also during earlier and subsequent uprisings—students had an important part. They were

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the first to sound the alarm and they were also the last victims. They did not play at civil war in the universities, but marched at the head of the revolutionary masses, mounted the barricades, and many of them died in battle. They were the vanguard. Only at the beginning of the present century did acts of violence begin to multiply within the universities themselves; they were exclusively the work of reactionaries, of aggressive chauvinists and antisemites. This applied not only to Poland and Rumania, but also to Austria and France. With the rising tide of fascism, student terror assumed hitherto unknown proportions; it threatened progressive and Jewish professors and, above all, the representatives of antifascism. The movement which at a later date began in Berkeley and other American elite universities and which soon afterwards was to proclaim itself a revolutionary current, represented something new in the sense that, for the first time, youths considering themselves as representatives of the extreme left used methods which until then had been the privilege and the distinguishing mark of the student organizations of the extreme right. (No one can think that such actions are comparable to those of Tsarist Russia's revolutionary students and young intellectuals.)

What have these acts of violence achieved? They were supposed to enforce a radical transformation of the universities; but this, as it soon emerged, was a sham objective. In actual fact, these students tried to take the place of the allegedly faltering proletariat and use the universities as the starting point for a revolutionary overthrow of society. That was also, undoubtedly, the purpose of the university reform, for which many others pleaded in vain and which has ever since remained on the agenda. Many defenders of the old university have capitulated and hastily identified themselves even with extreme demands. If this movement nevertheless does not succeed in achieving a rational reform of the universities it is because, diverted from its purpose by its own extremism, it has itself sabotaged the reform. Its only accomplishment is to have provoked a backlash which is likely to become stronger with the passage of time. One cannot forcibly make the grass grow by pulling it up.

Considering how intolerable life is under both the old reactionary-despotic regimes and the new ideological-totalitarian regimes, there is at present *not much, but astonishingly little violence from below*. It is all the more astonishing as the majority of the world population has lost its formerly automatic belief that rulers are necessarily legitimate and must not therefore be criticized, attacked or overthrown. Even the remotest village has learnt that the fame of the idols is transient and that, at any moment, fame may turn into infamousness. Every day produces fresh grounds for revolt, yet the rulers have little reason to fear violence.

What did it consist of, that enormous Nazi apparatus of repression and murder? It consisted of men whose names and whose guilt could and still can be easily established. Most of them live in honourable

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retirement. Where was the violence from below which should have overtaken them at the latest after their defeat so that we would not have to share the earth with murderers and torturers? Or who has ever heard of Stalin's henchmen being publicly arraigned and dealt with accordingly? Many countries have their torturers, not only Brazil or Spain, where the ancient Basque nation, deprived as it is of its freedom, must look on as its bravest sons are being tortured. There, as it happens, one of the chief torturers, a high-ranking police officer, was assassinated. But that was a rare exception. Certainly the kidnappers who threaten to kill completely innocent hostages have nothing in common with the kind of violence from below that, admittedly, often remains ineffective in its assault on a terrorist regime but that is nevertheless meaningful and attuned to the future. People who plant bombs in shops, university canteens or at bus stops so that innocent people are being killed must not claim that they act on behalf of a just cause or that they struggle against tyranny. He who, instead of killing a tyrant, threatens or kills a harmless hostage belongs himself to the world of tyranny.

In the spring of 1968 we witnessed in France both the multifarious spectacle of violence in action and the make-believe of violence, and in the summer there followed the sequel of a tragic capitulation. The six-minute long speech of an old man sufficed to put an end to the Paris student rebellion of May 1968; in August, the Czechs and Slovaks refrained from defending themselves against the invading army—not what the Yugoslavs would probably have done if faced by a similar challenge. Military resistance in that case would have been an exemplary instance of violence from below which is unconquerable whenever a whole nation regards it as legitimate, because it evokes everywhere the complicity of conscience or even practical deeds of solidarity.

It is characteristic of the present century that liberation movements turn into totalitarian organizations, which, in the name of liberty, enslave everybody as soon as they have conquered power and often even before, that rebellious violence is being glorified and used destructively—often in the manner of ordinary gangsters—in precisely those countries in which the greatest number of people enjoy most freedom. It is, finally, characteristic that there is little or no violence in countries ruled by regimes which repress even the weakest expression of opposition and suffocate even the germ of diverse ideas, thereby creating both the justification for violence from below and the means of its effective obstruction. In such circumstances, men have only one weapon left—the pen; the pen in the hands of writers such as Anna Akhmatova, Boris Pasternak, Andrei Sinyavsky, Iossif Brodsky or Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

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Anarchism—Past and Present

H. Schurer

ANYBODY old enough to remember the British General Election of 1945 will recall the enthusiasm of large sections of young middle class people for the aims of the Labour Party—large-scale nationalization and the creation of a welfare state worthy of the name. A decade earlier, the same generation group had been eagerly following the orange volumes of the Left Book Club, had felt that the Spanish Civil War was the basic experience of their lives, and had taken to reading books such as *Anti-Duehring* as the last word in philosophy for contemporary man. Soviet communism had then been the great magnet for the young and sensitive—it fully met their need for dedication. How different is the picture in the 1970s. In the same age group, the vocal section that sets the tone and is regarded as representative and in particular the students, now of a socially less restricted class than those of 1936 and 1945, is disillusioned with the pragmatism of Labour and looks at Soviet communism as an ossified structure devoid of emotional appeal. Instead we get a revival of interest in movements and persons that had good cause to be regarded as the great defeated of history—Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, and anarchism.

In the days of the Spanish Civil War, the great beneficiary of this tremendous historical experience was official communism, Spanish anarchism being then regarded as an exotic relic, which had managed to survive in Spain as a historical freak. Now anarchism stirs renewed interest, its classics are reissued, and new publications devoted to it are rolling from the presses. Yet it is by no means just a delayed impact of the Spanish Civil War which—following the pattern of a historical time lag—has led to this revival of interest. The authors discussing the present trends distinguish between an old and a new anarchism. A survey of the publications under review will show there really is a difference between classical anarchism as it had developed at the time of the first decade of the century and the contemporary movements which claim kinship with it.

OF the five works under review,[1] four are historical surveys, and one an outline sketch of the present position. Rudolf Krämer-Badoni's effort is an extremely popular compilation from the pen of a West German political columnist and novelist, with no pretensions whatever

[1] Rudolf Krämer-Badoni, *Anarchismus: Geschichte und Gegenwart einer Utopie* (Wien—München—Zürich, F. Molden, 1970).

Daniel Guérin, *Anarchism from Theory to Practice*, introduction by Noam Chomsky, translated by Mary Klopper (New York—London, Monthly Review Press, 1970).

Paul Avrich, *The Russian Anarchists* (Princeton University Press, 1967). (Columbia University. Studies of the Russian Institute.)

Luis Mercier-Vega, *L'increvable Anarchisme* (Paris, Union Générale d'Editions, 1970).

Anarchism today' (*Government and Opposition*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Autumn 1970, pp. 395–554).

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to depth or original scholarship. Thus, particular emphasis is laid on the more lurid and sensational episodes in the history of anarchism. In a hasty gallop, nineteenth-century figures and developments are linked with the French students' revolt of May 1968 and Mao's Cultural Revolution. The Spanish Civil War is given a mere five pages. While vividly written and interestingly presented, the aims the work sets itself are naturally very modest. A useful feature is its emphatic protest against the current fashion for the 'prettification' of the history of anarchism, the vogue for depicting it entirely in terms of a gentle non-violent form of opting out of the vulgar rat race of a materialist consumer society. Undoubtedly this is one aspect of it, but it is not the whole picture.

Daniel Guérin, famous for his pre-war Marxist interpretation of fascism and his post-war study of the French Revolution, used to be counted as a sympathizer with the Trotskyist cause. It is as a mature scholar and not as a young enthusiast that he has come to state the anarchist case. His short book, originally published in France in 1965, is a very competent survey, setting out in three sections the basic ideas of anarchism, proposals for running state and industry according to anarchist principles, and a short history of the anarchist movement. Three historical episodes are given special sections, the anarchist contribution to the Russian Revolution, the episode of the occupation of the factories in Italy after the first war, and the role of the anarchist movement in the Spanish Civil War. In the English translation, the author contributes a glowing postscript describing the events of May 1968 in Paris as an anarchist triumph. Noam Chomsky contributes a sympathetic introduction recommending Guérin's rehabilitation of anarchism. As a brief introduction to the subject by a sympathizer with the anarchist cause Guérin's book is a highly competent performance.

Nowadays we would call his book an apologia for the 'old' anarchism, regarded as a separate current in the working class movement, a current which as an active mass organization came to an end with the defeat of the Spanish Republic in 1939. What Guérin brings out very clearly is that large sections of the anarchist movement were attracted to Soviet Russia and hailed it as the promise of the future. Thus, in the great regrouping of the working class movement after the end of the first world war, it was communism and not anarchism that gained from the huge upheaval of war and revolution. As to Russia herself, Guérin makes no bones about the comparative weakness of the native anarchist movement. Kronstadt, as he makes quite clear, was not engineered by anarchists.

With Paul Avrich's book we enter the world of solid detached scholarship with no axe to grind. It is a thoroughly researched and organized history of the anarchist groups active in Russia from 1905 onwards, with particular emphasis on anarchist activities in 1917. While modern anarchism owes its elaboration to two Russians of aristocratic background, Bakunin and Kropotkin, in Russia it was never an influential mass movement. Like Guérin, Avrich makes it clear that Kronstadt was not the work of anarchist groups. Quite naturally, the most interesting part of the book deals with the fantastic episode of the reign of Makhno which will always remain fascinating, not so much as an example of the anarchist way of life triumphant for a short span of time in a part of

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Russia, but as an example of the emergence of a military genius in the conditions of a primitive peasant society undergoing the experience of a chaotic civil war.

Luis Mercier-Vega's little book is primarily an international survey of the anarchist industrial movements, and is particularly useful for his discussions of the situation in Latin America. In today's terminology, it is the old anarchism which is reviewed. The author is refreshingly free from any reverential attitude to anarchist doctrine and expresses his conviction that workers' control of industry as a universal panacea is not a feasible slogan. He has no hesitation in saying that some of the assumptions of the leaders of the old school of anarchism are extremely naive.

The editors of *Government and Opposition* are to be congratulated on the publication of a brilliant special issue devoted to 'Anarchism today'. David E. Apter compares the old and the new anarchism, and sees anarchist undercurrents in the alienation of sections of the younger middle class generation from the establishments, and in the rise of fringe movements acting as irritants on society. While the old anarchism of the Kropotkin variety was a protest against social Darwinism and stressed the factor of mutual aid, the new anarchism has been very much influenced by the impact of the radical wing of Freudianism. R. Gombin discusses the May 1968 events in Paris with its anarchist undertones, again with the emphasis on the new role of the students as catalysts of social movements. M. Lerner surveys the fringe movements of contemporary North America, described as 'counterculture', a term which will strike many readers as somewhat grandiloquent. David Stafford, in his essay on Britain, can point to anarchist trends in the campaign for nuclear disarmament and to the impact of anarchist concepts on the ideology of the New Left. C. Tsuzuki gives a concise summary of the history of Japanese anarchism, ending his chapter with a discussion of student movements. Nicolas Walter contributes a very useful bibliographical survey. With J. Romero Maura's essay, however, we are back with the old classical working class anarchism of Spain. This is an able piece of work, but as it stops in its coverage at the year 1936, this essay stands in some isolation among the other contributions.

What does it all amount to? Is anarchism—in the form of a protest movement of sections of the middle class young—a potent factor in the present world? Can American fringe groups, rebelling French students, British nuclear disarmers all be gathered together under the anarchist umbrella? While there is a common factor of spontaneity and anti-bureaucratic temper, there is an impression of intellectual amorphousness which overwhelms any student of the new anarchism. In the exceptionally brilliant conclusion to the symposium James Joll sums up in an exemplary and judicious manner. He puts the case in a nutshell by mentioning 'the difficulty anybody who talks about anarchism has in defining first what he is talking about'. As to the present situation, he advises caution by stating 'Whether in the long historical run, this is going to be a significant social movement, it is too soon to say.' The impact of anarchism so far has been indirect, perhaps most important to the causes of feminism and progressive education. So far the history of

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the working class movement has been largely written from the point of view of social democracy—perhaps the present ferment will lead to a fairer distribution of emphasis between the various currents. The impact of the new anarchism might be that we shall see the old anarchism in a new light.

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Documents: Soviet Union
Political Diary

Introduction

Anthony Astrachan

An unauthorized journal called Political Diary, *published from October 1964 to some time early in 1971, was revealed to Westerners for the first time in August 1971. Eleven of the 70-odd issues have reached the West, plus the table of contents of a twelfth and one paper from a thirteenth. It uncovered a previously unknown 'loyal opposition' of liberal Marxists in the Soviet Union. Many of their ideas resembled those of Alexander Dubcek and others whose efforts to put a 'human face' on communism were crushed by the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.*

The issues of Political Diary *that have reached the West show that its unidentified editors and writers, and presumably its readers, were basically loyal to the Soviet system—the Bolshevik revolution, the ideas of Lenin, the leading role of the Communist Party, the constitutional framework of Soviet institutions. Many were profoundly, sometimes dogmatically, Marxist. 'Opposition' may thus be too strong a term for them.*

But they differed from the Soviet establishment in their emphatic criticism of Stalin and his legacies, their intellectual commitment to human rights and to a democratic version of communism.

Reading the journal suggests that the men responsible for it were primarily scientists, writers, historians and journalists. Some were old Bolsheviks. Many must have been party members; most sounded like people who moved in party circles, people who did not wield power themselves but were personally close to individuals who did. Although they discussed Kremlin politics—often on the same speculative basis as Western analysts—they appeared to be more concerned with the politics of ideas and of literature than with the practicalities of making policy and putting it into effect or with in-fighting between Central Committee personalities.

They had a bent for history and for questions of philosophical and sociological theory, but they also discussed the Soviet economy, nationalities policy and other internal affairs, as well as cultural repression and literary ideology. They discussed relations among states and among communist parties, arms control and the likelihood of peace and war, the Middle East and Sino-Soviet relations.

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In a word, their writings demonstrated in practice the glasnost*—the free and open discussion—that they called for in theory.* Political Diary *quoted the official press, foreign publications and* samizdat *documents as bases for discussion, at times serving as a digest of points of interest for the busy reader. It also gave him much information the ordinary Soviet reader could never hear about, from Anastas Mikoyan's report on why Khrushchev was ousted to news of the 1968 events in Czechoslovakia.*

The men responsible kept Political Diary *an absolute secret. The number of readers was small—perhaps as few as 50 or 100. They were carefully selected and efforts were made to differentiate the typed copies so that if any reached the wrong hands it would be possible to trace the one that was diverted from the proper channels. Both Soviet officials in the West and recent emigrants with dissident connexions were at first reluctant to believe such a publication could be authentic because they had never heard of it in Moscow. The* emigrés, *at least, changed their minds after reading it and became believers in its existence.*

The decision to let the West know about Political Diary *suggested to me and to many observers, including some recent* emigrés, *that the liberal Marxists had reached the point of despair about their chances of influencing Soviet policy from within. They must have known that the Western reports about the journal would be broadcast back into the Soviet Union on the BBC, the Voice of America and Radio Liberty, but it is not at all certain that they hoped to increase their leverage in this way. Reports emerged from Moscow that the men of* Political Diary *were unhappy with the use made of their materials by Radio Liberty, the target of official opprobrium in the Soviet Union.*

In their secrecy, in their wide range of interests and narrow range of professions, in their loyalty to basic Soviet ideas and institutions—in all these, the men who wrote and edited Political Diary *differed from the better-known political dissidents who centre on the so-called Democratic Movement. These dissidents are usually outside the Soviet political culture, and many oppose the fundamentals of the Soviet system outright. They concentrate on human rights but come from a wider variety of places and professions. The two groups have in common, however, a commitment to free discussion and the rule of law. Neither likes the label 'underground' and in its early years* Political Diary *was reluctant even to use the term* samizdat. *The fact that it was unauthorized and uncensored will, however, be apparent to every reader of the excerpts published below.*

Extracts from the minutes of the Soviet Writers' Union party meeting in March 1956: 'Summing up the 20th Congress of the Communist Party'

From Surkov's speech: . . . the dirty deeds of Yezhov and Beria have left their mark on the work of Soviet writers. As people dis-

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appeared, the range of problems that could be touched on narrowed.—Surkov hotly disagreed with Sholokhov, who had said that the Writers' Union had become a Union of Dead Souls (applause). He criticized Panova's *Seryozha,* saying that her horizons had become narrow (shouts of ' Not true ! ').—' I don't arrogate to myself the right to judge ', Surkov continued, ' but I can at least express my opinion . . . This process in literature explains why the readers find our books more and more irritating.' (Shouts from the audience: ' It's not Panova that irritates the readers ', and ' What irritates the readers is lack of truth '). ' There were even remarks at one writers' meeting to the effect that " perhaps Marxism is not essential for writers, a free man is free and can think as he likes " ' (shouts of ' Hear, hear '). ' But I don't think so. I think the fact of party membership implies certain obligations on party members, by mutual voluntary agreement.'

The debate:

Avdeyenko: I loved Stalin warmly and sincerely. And then, as producer of the film *The Law of Life* I was summoned to Stalin, who was in a rage. The interrogation and trial lasted five hours. Stalin behaved like the magistrate in *The Romyantsev Affair.* I was shaken. Nobody said a word but Stalin. He not only spoke, he sentenced me, and my sentence was carried out immediately. I was expelled from everywhere. I was not trusted even in the army. But I continued to have faith and to love him. I often ceased to believe in myself. I am not remembering it now in order to get even—my example just shows how complicated and difficult it all is. You know from the 20th congress reports that Molotov, Mikoyan, Khrushchev and Bulganin continued to trust Stalin. When they realised their mistake it was probably already too late. Stalin the god betrayed our love . . . Nor are we blameless, we were silent when honest communists were expelled, we did not help their families.

Avdeyenko went on to praise the Central Committee of the party, saying that it had not turned aside from the Leninist path, that the party was growing from year to year, etc. There were shouts from the hall of ' Enough hypocrisy! ' and ' Turncoat'.

Blyakhin: (author of the scenario to *The Red Devil-Cubs*) I disagree with Mikoyan. Leninist norms and Leninist principles have not yet been re-established. The wish should not be father to the thought. The events of the past have left deep impressions in the people's consciousness, and in the party and the Soviet system. Lenin dreamed of creating a system that was Soviet not in words but in fact. How has Lenin's will been fulfilled? Instead of a socialist system we have a bureaucracy built on officialdom, heartlessness, careerism and nest-feathering. A system which has lost its sense of responsibility . . . And what about the sufferings of the Jewish people? The Bayliss affair blackened Tsarist autocracy in the eyes of the whole world, and the shameful ' doctors' plot ' is a stain on the party and above all on us

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Russian communists. Jews were dismissed because of their nationality, they were hindered from taking jobs, attempts were made to restrict their places of residence. All this has left its mark on us Russian party members (loud applause). How is it possible to say that no trace of this remains? Are there no secret anti-semites now? . . .

Maltsev: Putting the changes into practice will be difficult. The cadres are trained from top to bottom in the old style of leadership. In Ryazan Region the kolkhoz chairman is all-powerful, as before, and the district secretaries thump the table with their fists as before . . . As a writer I should like to examine the ground in which the cult of personality grew up, and the social causes which gave rise to it. Stalin's personal peculiarities, after all, do not account for everything. The philosophers ought to have a go. Surkov's speech shows that he understands nothing. Sholokhov does not understand either—his congress speech is a disgrace, and the reaction of the audience surprises me.

V. Rudny: . . . Lesyuchevsky has been talking about the rehabilitation of dead writers. That is necessary, of course. But I want to say a word about the rehabilitation of the living. The literary policy of the last few years needs re-examination. Why has Kazakevich's story *Two in the Steppe* been erased from Soviet literature? Why is Nilin still suffering under the burden of his errors in the film *The Great Life*? We are asked 'Why rub salt into old wounds?' But the Central Committee did not hesitate to delve into such ancient history, our literary affairs are small beer in comparison. This is the first real party gathering of writers. Why are we afraid to mention the name of Sofronov? Not in order to create a new 1937, but to make sure that he should not get away. Many people trusted even Sofronov. All literary-political power was in the hands of Gorbachev, Sofronov, Chakovsky and Smirnov. They brought suspicion into our midst. Even now a quiet battle is going on behind the scenes against Paustovsky, Bek, Kazakevich and the anthology *Literaturnaya Moskva*. We have not forgotten the disgraceful affair of Surov, to whose defence people are now springing on every side. We expelled him, while Sholokhov and Fadeyev signed a letter to the Central Committee to say that he did not drink. (Shouts of 'Shame!') . . .

Ermashev: This is very painful to all of us. But did everything that took place happen without a struggle? If that regime had not met with opposition nobody knows what might have happened. The wave of mass terror brought resistance to a head. Silence is a form of struggle. Not all books are false. Not everybody turned out to be a liar or a hypocrite. Those who were not were persecuted. But if the living power of the party and of Leninism had not been preserved, then we would not be sitting here now . . .

Voytinskaya: It used to be considered indelicate to talk about anti-semitism. I was ashamed when my son asked me about it, I don't

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know why. In 1948 Ehrenburg announced that he would not publish his work because Jewish names were being struck out of the papers. The non-party Russian intelligentsia took anti-semitism very hard. Alexei Tolstoy and Sergei Obraztsov came into *Izvestia* and asked to write an article, but were not allowed to. And people who glorified the anti-semites were sitting in the Central Committee; they remained there.

Pisarzhevsky: Why do we conceal so much from our people in TASS? We should inform them more boldly about our difficulties and where we are falling behind. Only thus can civic awareness be cultivated. Self-respect must be re-established . . . What can one expect of people brought up as lickspittles and forelock-touchers? . . .

Usiyevich: . . . Who created the cult? Stalin, but not only Stalin. We knew of Lenin's 'testament'. So why did we vote for Stalin? When in 1924 Trotsky came out against Leninism, we voted for the man who was for Leninism. It was after the Trotskyite demonstration in 1927 that people first started to rise at the mention of Stalin's name. Now when they ask in what milieux the cult originated, the answer is: it originated with the big boss and little bosses. An entire system and apparatus was created round the cult . . .

Orlova: Everybody is asking themselves the question: and what were you doing? I too ask myself: how could you vote for the expulsion of honest people, honourable communists, who sat in this hall? But we cannot afford the luxury of wallowing in this mood of ours. We are not abject nobles but a fighting party, responsible for the fate of our country . . . One of the most burdensome legacies of the personality cult was the double standard. We said one thing and did another. There was a great gulf between public opinion and the press. That has still not been completely done away with . . .

Makarev: . . . A great number of Soviet people were said to be part of an enemy organization. They were no such thing. All are equally to blame, from Khrushchev down to myself. Thanks to the Central Committee for having the courage to raise this question . . . The cult cannot be regarded as a collection of phenomena concerning Stalin alone. The cult was a negation of Leninism. The cult must be ridiculed and suppressed. It is essential to re-establish in every particular the atmosphere of the first years of Soviet power—simplicity and approachability. Then there will be no personality cult and the level of the party and the Central Committee will be higher. There is no need for a cult of Khrushchev or Bulganin or anybody else. There is no need for a Lenin personality cult either . . .

Bershadsky: I am convinced that when we discover all the reasons, a repetition will become impossible. We should not be afraid to wake sleeping dogs. Only this will teach us how to behave in the future . . .

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Ermashev said that silence is also a form of resistance, but silent heroes are no good to anyone. It is no accident that many of those here now are keeping silent too . . .

Political Diary, No. 30 (March 1967)

On the strange fate of the family of Ya. M. Sverdlov

. . . Yakov Mikhailovich Sverdlov himself was one of the greatest organizers of our party and leaders of the October Revolution and the Soviet state. He was Chairman of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee when he died of Spanish flu on 1 March 1919, being then generally acknowledged as number two in the party and the Soviet apparatus . . .

[His younger Brother Zinovi was adopted by Gorky, took the name Peshkov and emigrated to France, became a general in the Foreign Legion, and refused to have anything to do with Soviet visitors . . . His second brother Venyamin was a well-known party economics specialist in the thirties—he was arrested, and died or was shot in one of the northern camps. Now rehabilitated . . . The third brother Gherman made a career as a propagandist, and once played the part of his famous brother in a film which Stalin suppressed, after which Gherman lived in fear of arrest . . .]

Ya. M. Sverdlov's only son Andrei, as quite a young man (not much over 20), started working for the NKVD [a former name for the KGB]. He quickly gained promotion thanks to the pathological savagery and vulgarity of his nature. While still inexperienced, Andrei was entrusted mainly with the cases of 'children', i.e. the children of prominent party and government leaders, whose fellow-pupil Andrei had recently been in the Kremlin secondary school, and whom he had known from childhood. Many leading party figures were arrested at the time. Andrei first talked with the children of the arrested men as an agent provocateur, and then wrote reports on them and examined them. The young people, hardly come of age, were accused of creating a 'counter-revolutionary organization' . . .

It is true there was a time when Andrei Sverdlov was behind bars himself. But his was a fictitious arrest, a 'trick of the trade'. As A. Sverdlov himself told his cronies, the NKVD finance department mistakenly continued to pay him his salary while he was inside; from which it may safely be assumed that Andrei made use of the confidence his famous name inspired in others to be a stool-pigeon.

The NKVD system was to liquidate most stool-pigeons sooner or later, and their bosses too. But Andrei Sverdlov survived Yagoda and Yezhov and Beria . . .

After Stalin's death Sverdlov took off his NKVD uniform and turned to 'scientific work' in the Institute of Marxism-Leninism . . . When the 20th congress took place and Andrei Sverdlov learned of its decisions, he was seized by panic fear . . . He spent nearly a year in a

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special ward for the mentally sick in the Kremlin hospital . . . Andrei Sverdlov has done very little scientific work in the past 15 years . . .

But we know for certain that he still plays the role of a stool-pigeon. He spends a lot of time reading newspapers and journals in search of 'Trotskyite' errors. He reports them, and writes vulgar letters to the editors demanding action against the 'perpetrators'. A. Sverdlov was the first person to kick up a fuss about A. Nekrich's book in the Marxism-Leninism Institute's discussion . . .

A. Sverdlov has at least 10 government decorations to his credit. He received almost all these orders and medals for his services as senior investigator of particularly important matters in the central NKVD-MGB apparatus.

While hundreds of his innocent victims lie in mass graves in Kolyma, Norilsk, Ukhta and near Karaganda, Andrei Sverdlov lives in Moscow in a large, opulently furnished apartment in the so-called 'government house'—flat 319, 2 Serafimovich Street. His home telephone number is 231–94–97. His office number is 181–23–25. He has no intention of retiring. He has hardly ever been visited by fear in these last years. He even hopes for better times ahead. It is only for fascist murderers, after all, that the Statute of Limitations has been suspended . . .

Political Diary, No. 55 (April 1969)

The June 1957 plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party

One of the most critical episodes of the 'Khrushchev era' took place at the Central Committee plenum of June 1957. The 20th party congress had greatly strengthened Khrushchev's personal power. Firstly, his revelations about Stalin, limited as they were in scope, dealt stunning blows to the reputations of Stalin's closest associates, such as Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov and Malenkov. Secondly, after the 20th congress Khrushchev's supporters gained an absolute majority in the Central Committee. The hard core of opposition to Khrushchev was in the Presidium. But by 1957 Khrushchev had already made a good number of blunders in economic matters and in handling the administration of the country. The liquidation of all economic ministries and the creation of 'economic committees', the ploughing up of tens of millions [of hectares] of virgin lands which took place without proper preparation and scientific investigation, and the setting of an obviously unrealistic target—'to catch up and overtake the USA in per capita production of meat, milk and butter within three to four years', etc.—all this gave rise to profound and widespread misgivings in the party and state apparatus. It was decided to make use of these blunders, first and foremost, to get rid of Khrushchev.

The plot against Khrushchev entered its decisive phase when he was visiting Finland. Although for years there had been antagonism between Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov and Voroshilov, they managed some-

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how to close their ranks in the face of the common danger and create a united bloc in the Presidium. They were joined by Bulganin, who had recently been subjected to some criticism within the Presidium (apparently because he called Tito a faithful Leninist). Bulganin was at the time Chairman of the Council of Ministers [Prime Minister], and therefore his adherence to the anti-Khrushchev bloc was extremely significant. Other recruits to the bloc were Pervukhin and a candidate member of the Presidium, Saburov. Six out of the 11 members of the Central Committee Presidium were thus firmly ranged against Khrushchev.

The Presidium session began after Khrushchev's arrival in Moscow on 18 June. First with his attack on Khrushchev was Malenkov, supported by other members of the bloc. Mikoyan, Suslov and Furtseva firmly took Khrushchev's part. As for candidate member Shepilov, he was pro-Khrushchev at first, and then joined the opposition. Khrushchev was accused of many sins, including 'right-wing' deviation. The Presidium session continued almost without interruption for more than three days, and no Presidium member left the Kremlin. Finally the Presidium of the Central Committee resolved to remove Khrushchev; but he refused to bow to this decision, saying that the plenum had elected him First Secretary, and only the plenum could sack him. (There were rumours that Krushchev was to be appointed Minister of Agriculture. Recently it has become known that Molotov among others planned to arrest him.) Steps were taken to ensure that members of the plenum of the Central Committee should not learn of the session taking place in the Kremlin, and should be presented with the coup as a *fait accompli*. But these attempts were unsuccessful. It was just at this time that the solemn celebrations of the 250th anniversary of Leningrad were due. Many regional party secretaries who were members of the Central Committee had already arrived in Leningrad. Rumours of the lengthy sitting of the Presidium in the Kremlin spread by various channels among the Central Committee members, and many of them made their way to Moscow. While the Presidium was still sitting, 21 members of the Central Committee arrived in the Kremlin and asked to be admitted to the session. They were received by Khrushchev, Bulganin and Malenkov, but were not admitted. The Central Committee members gathered in Moscow formed something in the nature of an action committee; particularly active in it were Zhukov, who was then Minister of Defence, Kozlov, First Secretary of the Leningrad Region Committee, and also Serov, who was then KGB Minister. The security of the Kremlin was Serov's responsibility, and he allowed himself considerable licence. When Voroshilov came out to speak to the Central Committee members, Serov, seizing Voroshilov by the collar, demanded an immediate end to the Presidium's session. It is also said that Zhukov ordered several members of the Central Committee to be brought to Moscow in military jets. As for Kozlov, he too brought over many Central Committee members who had gathered in Leningrad

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for the celebrations. By 21 June about 100 members of the Central Committee had gathered in the Kremlin. There was no getting out of a plenary session, and it opened on 22 June. The anti-Khrushchev bloc lost. At the plenum Suslov gave an account of the Presidium's deliberations. Khrushchev made a speech on 'The internal situation of the Soviet Communist Party'. Molotov too spoke, about 'The international position of the USSR'. Then the debate began, and continued for almost 30 hours of continuous session. The results of the plenum are known. Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and 'their associate Shepilov' were removed from the Politbureau. Voroshilov, however, was left in it, and he became Chairman of the Presidium after Shvernik. Bulganin remained Prime Minister for the time being, receiving a reprimand. Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and Shepilov were expelled from the Central Committee, and the first three voted for their own expulsion. In the subsequent press treatment of the affair, only Molotov, Malenkov, Kaganovich and Shepilov were named as members of the anti-party group. To quote the published decision of the plenum: 'The anti-party group consisting of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov and their associate Shepilov came out against the party line at a time when the party, under the leadership of the Central Committee, and with the support of the whole people, was working hard at the fulfilment of the historic decisions of the 20th congress aimed at the further development of the national economy and the constant raising of the standard of living of the Soviet people, at the re-establishment of Leninist norms of party life, and an end to infringements of revolutionary legality, strengthening the links between the party and the masses of the people, the development of Soviet socialist democracy, reinforcing the friendship of the Soviet people, the pursuance of a correct national policy; and in foreign affairs, the lessening of international tension in the interests of ensuring lasting peace. In all these fields real successes have already been achieved, as every Soviet person knows.'

Political Diary, No. 9 (June 1965)

Note on the funeral of Kornei Chukovsky

Korney Chukovsky died at the end of October. The funeral of the 90-year-old Korney Chukovsky is described in an anonymous note which apparently came from the pen of a professional writer, and circulated among the Moscow intelligentsia. We print below the text of this note which is headed: *At Kornei Chukovsky's funeral.*

'The last man they were at all scared of has now died. There is a long queue in the ante-room behind the stage of the PDL. We await our turn to be led out to the guard of honour and the coffin lying in state on the stage. Most of those present are those who are not working, and those who traditionally bring the proceedings to a close, who later figure in the newsreels and photographs—Polevoy and Fedin—appear only towards the end of the leave-taking. Lydia Korneyevna Chukovskaya is

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said to have provided the heads of the Moscow division of the writers' union in advance with a list of those whom her father did not want invited to the funeral. That probably explains the absence of Arkadi Vasilev, Mikhail Alexeyev and other members of the literary Black Hundred. Very few Muscovites have come to pay their last respects—the newspapers did not mention the coming lying in state. There are few people, but, as at the funerals of Ehrenburg and Paustovsky, the militia cluster like flies. Besides the uniformed branch, there are a number of boys in mufti with morose, disdainful expressions. The boys began by taking over all the available chairs, letting no one linger or sit down. Shostakovich, seriously ill, arrived. They did not let him take his coat off in the vestibule, and in the hall they forbade him to sit on a chair. There was a row.

'The memorial service is in secular form. Mikhalkov stumbles through the high-flown verbiage, delivering it with highly inappropriate expressionlessness and indifference. Then there begins: "From the Soviet Writers' Union . . ." "From the Russian Federation Writers' Union . . ." "From the Children's Literature publishing house . . ." "From the Ministry of Education and the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences . . ." All this is read out with the same stupid pomposity as the major-domos must once have used to summon the carriages of departing guests, Count So-and-so or Prince Such-and-such. Whom are we burying, anyway? Is it some official mandarin, or is it Kornei, the buoyant wit with his wry sense of the ridiculous? A. Barto rattled off her "lesson". Kassil performed a complex verbal pirouette designed to show his audience how close he personally had been to the departed. And only L. Panteleyev, breaking through the barricade of officialese, said a few clumsy and sad words about Chukovsky's popular image. Kornei Ivanovich's family had asked L. Kabo to speak. But when, in the crowded room, she sat down at a table to make a few notes for her speech, KGB general Ilin (in civil life administrative secretary of the Moscow writers' organization) approached her and said politely, but firmly, that she would not be allowed to. Why not? "A great many people would have liked to speak, but time is pressing. Kornei Ivanovich must be buried while it is still light."

'The old, old story. They made haste to bury Pasternak just like this. (On that occasion a leading member of the *Litfond*, one Elinson, had snatched a spade from the hand of a dilatory grave-digger and had himself started to shovel earth on the coffin.) At Ehrenburg's funeral, passes were issued "for his immediate circle". As a result most of the dead man's friends could not come to the Novodeviche cemetery, where, because of "pressure of time", Slutsky was denied the right to say his speech of farewell; and last July, when Paustovsky was being buried, once again his relatives and friends were unable to speak—it was necessary to hurry off to Tarussa. But then, on the Moscow-Tarussa road, these same "people in a hurry" had stopped the funeral cortege for half an hour to prevent the young people getting at Konstantin

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Georgiyevich's grave. The same provocatory trick was played over A. A. Akhmatova's coffin. First of all people were compelled to hang around the morgue of the Sklifovsky hospital for over an hour in complete ignorance of what was happening, and then all of a sudden there was a lightning 10-minute farewell accompanied by constant proddings from the militia and *Litfond* bosses. Why this fear of dead men? Well, you know, it's tradition. This is how Russian writers have been buried for almost 200 years. This base and cowardly ritual has been passed down from generation to generation of gendarmes and literary jailers, from Benckendorff and Bulgarin to Ilin and Mikhalkov. The literary secret police always have sharp noses for the danger of any outburst of human feeling, any outburst caused by sudden grief. A magnetic field of social protest invariably builds up around the coffin of a great writer. The intelligentsia, who on ordinary days are distrait, disunited and ground under by the difficulties of life, suddenly see themselves beside the graves of those dear to them as a society of brothers in thought and belief. At such times they find official lies particularly hard to swallow. People want the word of truth, and even the silent become orators. The authorities, now and in the past, have never bothered to try a dialogue; they have merely sent police reinforcements to the writers' gatherings.

'. . . The body of Kornei Ivanovich is being carried out of the hall. In life he was a head taller than most. Now his body seems enormous. Buses and cars make their way to Peredelkino.

'The funeral service takes place on the slope of the Peredelkino cemetery. It is muddy. We stick in the churned earth. Wet snow falls on bared heads. The crowd grows. The residents of Peredelkino gather in their quilted coats and gumboots. It is an odd crowd. There is no making out who predominates—the locals, the intelligentsia, or various ranks of the militia. In the middle of the human huddle is the lid of the coffin, black and red, upright, and a loudspeaker on two posts. From the loudspeaker issues the apathetic voice of Mikhalkov, sounding even deader and hollower than before. Worn clichés to the effect that young and old know and love Chukovsky. Then a similar speech by the chairman of the District Executive Committee in whose jurisdiction the village of Peredelkino lies, read from a text with a similar lack of expression. The words are garbled. There is no lively intonation, no sincere word, no personal recollection. "The motherland will not forget . . . Meetings with him were always joyous occasions . . ." Two steps from the platform stand the pine-trees under which lies the genius of Russian letters, Boris Pasternak. We are burying Kornei Chukovsky, a great master of the Russian language; in the crowd are dozens of Russian writers, masters of words; and the officials on the platform grind out their speeches in meagre and stereotyped journalese.

'But suddenly a stir goes through the "bosses". Pavel Nilin has expressed the wish to speak. Ilin and Mikhalkov do not want to let him, but it is hard to argue with the obstinate Nilin. There he is up on the

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staging, wobbling on the insecure planking. He has raised his large hand. People turn silent and listen. For the first time today human speech has been heard on this hillside. Nilin remembers: only a month ago he and Kornei Ivanovich had walked together in these fields. Kornei Ivanovich had wistfully thought aloud that if only he could last out this autumn, there would be light at the end of the tunnel. Nilin had replied that Kornei Ivanovich would last out this and many another autumn and spring; with his resilience of spirit and body he would close the eyes of many who were still young. Chukovsky had laughed, glad that Nilin did not believe in his impending death.

'And we, standing next to the speaker, were picturing Kornei Ivanovich laughing, leaning on his stout stick in the bare field. Everyone who knew him had often seen this picture: Kornei laughing, gesticulating, sometimes guffawing like a boy. Nilin was saying: we still have not altogether realised whom we have lost. A little time must pass before those of whom there are at the moment so few in our country, those who compose only a very small segment of the people—the intelligentsia—can realise whom they have left in the Peredelkino cemetery on this miserable October day. Nilin looked as if he wanted to add something, but he stopped abruptly, sobbed, flapped his hand and left the platform.

'The hammers sounded hollowly on the wood. The crowd moved up the hill, nearer the open grave. We push past fences and between bare bushes. The crowd has covered Pasternak's grave. It affords a good view of the last act of the funeral.

'They were very different: animated Boris Leonidovich, going through life like a ship under full sail, and the shrewd peasant Kornei Ivanovich. They were not friends, although each of them in his heart had to respect the other. Death has erased the superficial and the accidental in the relationship of these two great teachers of ours, and we are left with the memory of these men whose very existence made this world more human, more hopeful and truthful. Now they shall lie side by side, and remain side by side in our memories.

'The " boys " of the militia, hands in pockets, professionally surveying the surrounding scene, make for their cars. The human river flows off the cemetery hill slowly and unwillingly. People stop and gather in knots. Now the crowd has dissolved those who form its core become visible, those to whom Chukovsky is really dear: some 15 writers and academics. They include I. Grekova, L. Kabo, V.Yampolsky, V. Asmus, P. Nilin, G. Svirsky, E. Gershtein, O. Chaikovskaya, and some old librarians and young university people.

'Yes, one is loth to leave this hill. Through the pompous ritual, through the wordy wrapping the fact itself begins to show: Kornei Ivanovich is no more. It is difficult to imagine Peredelkino, difficult to imagine life itself, without him.

Litterateur.'

Political Diary, No. 64 (December 1969)

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Address by V. A. Sosnora to the executive secretariat of the USSR Writers' Union

Alexander Isayevich Solzhenitsyn did not address his letter to me, and therefore I have only just read it and been astounded by it.

The newspapers published the rantings of literary imbeciles like Sholokhov, who is as allergic to sensitive literary questions as the Persian wild boar to the Phrygian flute. And the letter which ought to have been one of the main talking points at the congress was suppressed.

What good did that do? In two weeks the letter has circulated in thousands of copies. In another two weeks there will not be a single person in Russia who has not read it . . .

One of the writers who now represents decency and the conscience of the country—one of the few, at a generous estimate—was not chosen as a delegate at the conference. The reasons for this are quite definite and unambiguous: he is a writer who is always writing, always thinking, worrying and suffering for others; he is an un-person: he is also an enemy to the bunch of idlers and flunkeys who, if they write at all (which very seldom happens), write only what they are urged to write by the authorities; and if they think, then only what the authorities have already thought out for them . . .

A professional writer, the pride of Soviet literature, a fiery fighter against an alien ideology, has to approach the director of the publishing house like a ragged Hindu his many-headed deity, not knowing which face the monster will turn to him, and what abuse it will bestow on the flower of the Soviet intelligentsia. The writer has all the obligations; the director has all the rights. But what is the director? An ideology-merchant, a parasite on literature.

I have a good idea of the truly draconian censorship of the past. I see before me the writer-censors Nikitenko, Goncharov, Akovkov. These writers can be accused of a multitude of sins, but not of lack of literary talent or literary taste.

Is there a single censor at this moment who is a writer, or at the very least a literary expert? Remember Marx's early article on censors, discussing how little right an aesthetically illiterate person had to correct or suppress, say, Goethe's poetry. Like it or not, Goethe was a genius.

I also have a good idea of the censorship of today. This mysterious phenomenon is intangible, like an invisible surgeon in the operating theatre, but its surgical operations are real enough . . .

But not everything need be put down to the censorship.

The censor-in-chief, like Jesus Christ, has his twelve apostles, who watchfully protect and stoutly defend this responsible personage. We do not have just one guilty censor. We have twelve.

The first censor is the author himself, who censors his book to the

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utmost before taking it to the publisher. The second is the editor who receives the book. The third is the editor who is given the manuscript to work over. The fourth is the first reviewer. The fifth is the second reviewer. The sixth is the senior editor. The seventh is the whole editorial board. The eighth is the editor-in-chief of the Department of Belles Lettres. The ninth is the publishers' council. The tenth is the editor-in-chief of the publishing house. The eleventh is the director. The twelfth is the local office of ideological control—and SELF-CENSORSHIP is only the thirteenth bead on the rosary . . .

Of the 300 writers who received Solzhenitsyn's letter, not one plucked up the courage to read it out to the congress. Various euphemisms spring to mind, but the fact is they were all cowards.

The generation gap argument is a load of rubbish. The generation gap is only a biological phenomenon. I am 31. But there are no fewer bad eggs in my generation than in the older one. My generation is not my age-group, but a group of talented and decent people—the generation of Paustovsky, Ehrenburg, Tvardovsky, Solzhenitsyn, Voznesensky and Gorbovsky. It follows that the persecution of Solzhenitsyn is not the fault of the OLDER GENERATION or the YOUNGER GENERATION, but of ALL OF US and of our READERS.

The enemy in 1963 was not formalism.

That much has become clear now that all the so-called formalists have been more or less officially acknowledged. They have not changed their forms or their point of view since 1963.

The fight was against those with talent!

Gifted people always work for the good of their country, and the mediocre are always its enemies. The fight was led then, as always, by the mediocrities. The gifted have no need to fight anything or anyone; merely by being born they are the victors. All they have to do is fight for every hour of their existence. They have achieved doubtful fame through the twilight existence of their manuscripts, and been deprived of the opportunity of living as people and as citizens . . .

The best books at present circulating in manuscript are a golden treasury of Russian literature. Concealing this treasure from the people is literary officialdom's unforgivable sin.

I am 31 . . . I have been writing professionally daily for the last 15 years (by professionally I refer to quality, not publication).

I have published two books of verse, two books of 3,000 lines each. Like all books, mine were painstakingly castrated in anything from seven to twelve stages.

All the best things I have written are unpublished, although I have not kept any of them under the counter, and have submitted everything I have written to just about every periodical in the country . . .

My name is unknown, my voice is weak. But as a member of the

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Writers' Union I consider I have the right to ask the secretariat publicly to debate Solzhenitsyn's resolution and the letters replying to his letter. In my opinion the secretariat is obliged to give its approval to this . . .

Respectfully,

Victor Alexandrovich Sosnora

Political Diary, No. 33 (June 1967)

Memorandum

Andrei D. Sakharov

I REQUEST a discussion of the general questions partially discussed in a previous letter from R. A. Medvedev, V. F. Turchin and myself, and in my letter of 1968. I also request the consideration of a number of particular questions of a topical nature which I find extremely disturbing.

I have included below, in two general lists, questions which, although differing in degree of importance and self-evidence, have a definite inner connexion. A discussion and partial argumentation of these questions will be found in the above-mentioned letters and in the postscript to this memorandum.

I wish also to inform you that in November 1970, I, together with V. N. Chalidze and A. N. Tverdokhlebov, was involved in the creation of a 'Human Rights Committee' for the purpose of studying the problem of safeguarding human rights and promoting the growth of a legal awareness. I enclose some of the committee's documents. We hope to be useful to society, and we seek a dialogue with the [country's] leadership and a frank and public discussion of problems of human rights.

A. SOME URGENT PROBLEMS

THE problems listed below appear to me to need urgent consideration. For brevity's sake they have been expressed in the form of proposals. While recognizing that some of these problems require further study, and conscious that the list is of necessity an incomplete and therefore to a certain extent a subjective one (I have tried to set out several equally important questions in the second half of this memorandum, while several [others] could not be included at all), I nevertheless consider that a discussion of the following proposals by the competent authorities is essential.

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1. Concerning political persecution

I feel it is high time to consider the pressing problem of implementing a general amnesty for political prisoners, that is, persons convicted under Articles 70, 72, 190–1, –2 and –3 of the RSFSR Penal Code and the equivalent articles of the codes of the union republics; persons convicted on religious grounds; persons confined in psychiatric institutions; persons sentenced for attempting to cross the frontier; and political prisoners given an additional sentence for attempting to escape or for [conducting] propaganda in their camp.

Measures should be taken to ensure real and widespread public access to the hearings of all legal proceedings, especially those of a political character. I consider it important that all judicial verdicts carried in violation of the principle of public access should be reviewed.

I hold inadmissible all psychiatric [methods of] repression on political, ideological and religious grounds. I am of the opinion that a law must be passed to protect the rights of persons subjected to compulsory psychiatric hospitalization; resolutions must be passed and the necessary legislative measures introduced to protect the rights of persons assumed to be mentally ill in the course of a prosecution on political charges In particular, private psychiatric investigation by commissions independent of the authorities should be allowed in both cases.

Independently of the general solution of these problems, I request the examination by the competent organs of a number of pressing individual cases, some of which are listed in the attached note.

2. Concerning publicity, freedom of information exchange and freedom of beliefs

A bill concerning the press and the mass media should be submitted for nationwide discussion.

A resolution should be passed calling for greater freedom in the publication of statistical and sociological data.

3. Concerning nationalities problems and the problem of leaving the country

Resolutions and laws should be passed fully restoring the rights of peoples deported under Stalin.

Laws should be passed to ensure that citizens may easily and without hindrance exercise their right to leave the country and freely return to it. The directives restricting this right and in contravention of the law should be annulled.

4. Concerning international problems

We should show initiative and announce (or affirm, unilaterally at first) our refusal to be the first to use weapons of mass destruction

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(nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and incendiary weapons). We should allow inspection teams to visit our territory for effective arms control (assuming that we conclude an agreement on disarmament or partial limitation of certain types of armaments).

In order to consolidate the results of our changed relations with East Germany we should work out a new, more flexible and realistic position on the question of West Berlin.

We should alter our political position in the Middle East and in Vietnam, and actively seek, through UNO and diplomatic channels, a peaceful settlement in the shortest possible time, on the basis of a compromise, with the renunciation by the USA and the USSR of any intervention, military or political, direct or indirect; the promotion of a programme of large-scale economic aid on an apolitical, international basis (through UNO?); and the proposal that UN troops be widely used to safeguard political and military stability in these areas.

B. THESES AND PROPOSALS WITH REGARD TO GENERAL PROBLEMS

BY way of preparation for a discussion of the basic problems of the development and foreign policy of our country I have attempted to formulate a number of theses. Some of them are set out in the form of discussion points. I have tried to give the fullest possible exposition of my views, although I realize that some of the theses will seem unacceptable and others uninteresting or insignificant.

1. Since the year 1950 a number of important measures have been taken in our country to eliminate the most dangerous and ugly features of the previous stage of development of Soviet society and state policies. However, at the same time there do occur certain negative phenomena—deviations, inconsistencies and sluggishness in the implementation of the new line. It is essential to work out a clear-cut and consistent programme of further democratization and liberalization, and to take a number of immediate steps as a matter of urgency. This is required in the interests of technical and economic progress, of gradually overcoming our backwardness and isolation from the advanced capitalist countries, and [in the interests of] the prosperity of large sectors of the population, internal stability and external security. The development of our country is taking place in the extremely difficult conditions presented by our relations with China. We are faced with serious internal difficulties in the sphere of the economy and the general standard of living, [the sphere of] technical and economic progress, culture and ideology.

One must point out the increasingly acute nationalities problem, the complexities of the interrelationship between the party-state apparatus and the intelligentsia, and of that between the basic mass of the workers

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who find themselves relatively worse off as regards their standard of living and financial status, their prospects for professional promotion and cultural development, and many of whom feel disillusioned with all the 'fine words', and the privileged group of 'the bosses', whom the more backward sectors of the workers frequently, and chiefly by virtue of traditional prejudices, identify with the intelligentsia. Our country's foreign policy is not always sufficiently realistic. We need basic decisions in order to prevent possible complications.

2. I venture the opinion that it would be correct to characterize as follows the society towards the creation of which urgent state reforms as well as the efforts of citizens to develop a social conscience should be directed:

The basic aim of the state is the protection and safeguarding of the basic rights of its citizens. The defence of human rights is the loftiest of all aims.

State institutions act always in complete accordance with laws (which are stable, and known to all citizens, institutions and organizations).

The happiness of the people is safeguarded, in particular, by their freedom of work, [freedom] of consumption, [freedom] in their private lives, and in their education, their cultural and their social activities, freedom of conviction and of conscience, and freedom of exchange of information, and of movement.

Openness facilitates the social controls safeguarding legality, justice, and the rightness of all decisions taken, contributes to the effectiveness of the entire system, makes for a scientific and democratic system of government, and promotes progress, prosperity, and national security.

Competitiveness, openness, and the absence of privileges ensure an equitable distribution of incentives for the labour, personal capabilities and individual initiative of all citizens.

There is a definite stratification of society based on type of occupation, nature of opportunities and [social] relations, but there must also be [illegible in original]. . . .

The basic energies of the country are directed towards harmonious internal development, with the purposeful deployment of labour and natural resources and this is the basis of its power and prosperity. The country and its people are always ready to enter into friendly international cooperation and aid within the framework of universal brotherhood, but the society is such that it does not need to use foreign policy as a means of internal political stabilization, or of extending its spheres of influence or exporting its ideas. Messianism, delusions as to the uniqueness [of a society] and the exclusive merits of its own path, as well as the rejection of the paths of other [societies], are alien to [the ideal] society; organically alien to it also are dogmatism, adventurism, and aggression.

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In the actual conditions obtaining in our country in particular, we will only overcome our economic difficulties and improve the people's standard of living by a concentration of resources on internal problems, and, given some additional conditions (democratization, the elimination of our people's isolation in terms of access to information from the rest of the world, and economic measures), this alone will give us any hope of gradually narrowing the gap between ourselves and the advanced capitalist countries, safeguard national security in the event of a deterioration in [our relations with] China, and ensure that we have ample opportunity to assist countries in need.

3. *Foreign policy.* Our chief foreign policy problem is our relations with China. While offering the Chinese people the alternative of economic, technical and cultural aid, and fraternal cooperation and progress together along the road of democracy, and always leaving open the possibility of developing relations in this way, we must at the same time display a special concern for the safeguarding of our national security, avoid all other possible complications in our foreign and domestic policies, and implement our plans for the development of Siberia, keeping this element in mind.

We must aim at non-interference in the internal affairs of other socialist countries, and mutual economic aid.

We must take the initiative in calling for the creation (within the framework of the UN?) of a new international consultative organ, an 'International Council of Experts on the Problems of Peace, Disarmament, Economic Aid to Needy Countries, the Defence of Human Rights, and the Protection of the Environment' consisting of authoritative and impartial individuals. The council's statutes, and the procedure for the election of its members, must guarantee it maximum independence of the interests of individual states and groups of states. In deciding the composition and statutes of the council, it is probably essential to take into account the wishes of the main international organizations. An international pact must be signed obliging legislative and governmental organs to examine the 'council of experts'' recommendations, which must be well-founded and open to scrutiny. The decisions of national organs with regard to these recommendations must also be openly proclaimed, irrespective of whether the recommendations are accepted or rejected.

4. *Economic problems, management, personnel.* Extension of the 1965 economic reform, increase in the economic independence of all units of production, review of a number of restrictive regulations with regard to the selection of personnel, salaries and incentives, systems of material supply and stocks, planning, cooperation, choice of output profile, and allocation of funds.

Management and personnel: resolutions should be passed to make the work of state institutions at all levels more open to public scrutiny,

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as far as the interests of the state will allow. A review of the 'behind-closed-doors' tradition is especially vital. With regard to the problems of personnel policy, there should be increased open and active public control over the selection of personnel, there should be procedures for the election of management personnel at all levels and their replacement if they are found unsuitable. I also suggest the normal requirement of any democratic programme: the system of holding elections in the absence of a number of candidates, that is, 'election without choice', must be abolished. At the same time the following are essential: increased availability of information; self-sufficiency; the right to experiment; a shift in the centre of responsibility towards the subsidiary enterprise and its employees; improved methods of specialist instruction and business training for management personnel at all levels; the abolition of special privileges linked with professional and party ranking, since these are very harmful in social and working relations; publication of official salaries; reorganization of personnel departments; abolition of the system of *nomenklatura* and other such survivals of the previous epoch; the creation of scientific-consultative councils attached to authorities, to be composed of scholars with various specialist qualifications, and endowed with the necessary independence.

Measures to promote the expansion of agricultural production on private plots belonging to collective farmers, workers on state farms, and individual peasants; changes in fiscal policy; increased land usage in the agricultural sector; changes in the system of supplying this sector with modern, purpose-built agricultural machinery, fertilizers, etc. Measures to improve the supply of building materials and fuel to the village; the expansion of all forms of cooperative farming in the village, with changes in fiscal policy, permission to hire and pay labourers in accordance with the requirements of the job, and changes in the system of supplying materials to the village.

Increased opportunity for and profitability of private initiative in the service industries, health service, small trading, education, and so on.

5. The question of the gradual abolition of the passport regulations should be examined, since these are a serious hindrance to the development of the country's productive resources and a violation of civil rights, particularly those of rural dwellers.

6. *Information exchange, culture, science and freedom of beliefs.* Freedom of beliefs, the spirit of enquiry and creative anxiety should be encouraged.

The jamming of foreign radio broadcasts should be stopped, more foreign literature brought in from abroad, the international copyright agreement signed, and foreign travel facilitated, in order to overcome the isolation which is having a pernicious effect on our development.

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Resolutions should be passed ensuring the real separation of Church and State, and real (that is, legally, economically, and administratively guaranteed) freedom of conscience and worship.

A review should be carried out of those aspects of the interrelations between the party-state apparatus and art, literature, theatre, organs of education, and so on, which are harmful to the development of culture in our country, reduce the boldness and versatility of the creative endeavour, and lead to conventionality, greyness and ritual repetition. In the social sciences and the humanities, which play an ever greater role in modern life (philosophy, history, sociology, jurisprudence, etc.), we must ensure the elimination of stagnation, a widening of scope in the creative endeavour, an independence of all superimposed opinions, and the use of the entire gamut of foreign experience.

7. *Social policies.* The possibility of abolishing the death penalty should be explored. Special- and strict-regime imprisonment should be abolished since it conflicts with [the principle of] humaneness. Measures should be taken to perfect the penitentiary system, utilizing foreign experience and the recommendations of the UN.

A study should be made of the possibility of setting up a public supervisory organ to eliminate the use of physical coercion (assault, starvation, cold, etc.) against detainees, persons under arrest or investigation, and convicted persons.

There must be a radical improvement in the quality of education; increased salaries and independence for schoolteachers and college lecturers; less importance should be attached to the formal role of diplomas and degrees; the educational system should be less monolithic; a wider range of subjects should be studied in schools; there should be increased guarantees of the right to freedom of beliefs.

Intensified measures should be taken in the struggle against alcoholism, including the possibility of public control over all aspects of the problem.

Stronger measures should be implemented in the struggle against noise, air and water pollution, erosion, the salting and chemical pollution of the soil. More should be done to preserve forests and wild and domestic animals, as well as to prevent cruelty to animals.

Reform of the health service. Expansion of the network of private polyclinics and hospitals; a more important role for doctors, nurses and health visitors in private practice; salary increases for health service employees at all levels; reform of the drug industry; general access to modern medicines and equipment; the introduction of X-ray television equipment.

8. *Legal policies.* The abolition of all forms of discrimination, overt and concealed, with regard to beliefs, national characteristics, etc.

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Real openness of legal proceedings, wherever this does not conflict with basic civil rights.

The taking up again of the question of the ratification by the USSR Supreme Soviet of the pacts on human rights concluded at the 21st session of the UN General Assembly, and of [the USSR's] signing the optional protocol to these pacts.

9. *Interrelations with the national republics.* Our country has proclaimed the right of a nation to self-determination, even if this means secession. In the case of Finland, implementation of the right to secede was sanctioned by the Soviet government. The right of union republics to secede is proclaimed by the USSR Constitution. There is, however, some vagueness in the relationship between these guarantees and the procedures regarding preparation for, necessary discussion of, and actual implementation of this right. In fact, the mere discussion of such questions frequently leads to prosecution. In my opinion, a juridical settlement of the problem and the passing of a law guaranteeing the right to secession would be of great internal and international significance as a confirmation of the anti-imperialist and anti-chauvinist nature of our policies. The number of republics tending towards secession is, to all appearances, very small, and these tendencies would doubtless become even weaker with time as a result of the future democratization of the USSR. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that any republic which secedes from the USSR for one reason or another by peaceful, constitutional means, would maintain intact its ties with the socialist commonwealth of nations. In this case, the economic interests and defence capabilities of the socialist camp would not suffer, since the cooperation of the socialist countries is by nature complete and all-embracing and will doubtless become even more extensive in conditions of mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs. For these reasons, discussion of the question I have raised does not seem to me to be dangerous.

IF this memorandum appears here and there to be excessively peremptory in tone, that must be put down to its abbreviated form. The problems with which our country is confronted are closely connected with some aspects of the general world crisis of the twentieth century—the crisis of international security, of loss of stability in social development, the ideological impasse and disillusionment with the ideals of the recent past, nationalism, and the threat of dehumanization. The constructive, prudent, flexible, and at the same time decisive solution of our problems will, by virtue of our country's special position in the world, be of tremendous significance for the whole of mankind.

5[1] March 1971 (June 1972)

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Postscript to the Memorandum *

The *Memorandum* was sent to the General Secretary of the CPSU [Mr Brezhnev] on 5 March 1971. It received no reply. I do not think it would be right for me to delay its publication any longer. The *Postscript* was written in June 1972. It contains some additions to and partly replaces the note 'On politically-motivated persecution' mentioned in the text.

I began my activity approximately 10 to 12 years ago, when I realised the criminal character of a possible thermo-nuclear war and of thermo-nuclear tests in the atmosphere. Since then I have revised my views to a considerable extent, particularly since the year 1968, which began for me with work on *Reflections on Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom*, and ended, as for everybody else, with the rumbling of tanks in the streets of unyielding Prague.

As before, I cannot fail to appreciate the great and beneficial changes (social, cultural and economic) which have taken place in our country in the last 50 years, realising however that analogous changes have taken place in many countries and that they are a manifestation of worldwide progress.

As before, I consider that it will be possible to overcome the tragic conflicts and dangers of our time only through the convergence of capitalism and the socialist regime.

In capitalist countries this process must be accompanied by a further improvement in the protection of workers' rights and a reduction in the role of militarism and its influence on political life. In socialist countries it is also essential to reduce the militarization of the economy and the role of a messianic ideology. It is vitally necessary to weaken the extreme forms of centralism and party-state bureaucratic monopoly, both in the economic sphere of production and consumption, and in the sphere of ideology and culture.

As before, I consider the democratization of society, the development of openness in public affairs, the rule of law and the safeguarding of basic human rights to be of decisive importance.

As before, I hope that society will evolve along these lines under the influence of technological-economic progress, although my prognoses have now become more cautious.

It seems to me now, more than ever before, that the only true guarantee for the safeguarding of human values in the chaos of uncontrollable changes and tragic upheavals is man's freedom of conscience and his moral yearning for the good.

Our society is infected by apathy, hypocrisy, petit bourgeois egoism and hidden cruelty. The majority of representatives of its upper stratum—the party-state apparatus of government and the highest, most

* Academician Sakharov released this Postscript on 22 June 1972, the day after the arrest of Pyotr Yakir and 15 months after his *Memorandum* was sent to the Party leaders (without eliciting any reply).

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successful layers of the intelligentsia—cling tenaciously to their open and secret privileges and are profoundly indifferent to the infringement of human rights, the interests of progress, security, and the future of mankind. Others, although deeply concerned in their hearts, cannot allow themselves any freedom of thought and are condemned to the torture of internal conflict. Drunkenness has assumed the dimensions of a national calamity. It is one of the symptoms of the moral degradation of a society which is sinking ever deeper into a state of chronic alcoholic poisoning.

The country's spiritual regeneration demands the elimination of those conditions which drive people into becoming hypocritical and time-serving, and which lead to feelings of impotence, discontent and disillusionment. Everybody must be assured, in deed and not just in word, of equal opportunities for advancement in his work, in education and cultural growth, and the system of privileges in all spheres of consumption must be abolished. Full intellectual freedom must be assured and all forms of persecution for beliefs must cease. A radical educational reform is essential. These ideas are the basis of many proposals in the *Memorandum.*

In particular the *Memorandum* mentions the problem of improvement in the material condition and independence of two of the most numerous and socially significant groups of the intelligentsia, the teachers and medical workers. The sorry state of popular education and of the health service is carefully hidden from the eyes of foreigners, but cannot remain secret from those who wish to see. A free health service and education are no more than an economic illusion in a society in which all surplus value is expropriated and distributed by the state. The hierarchical class structure of our society, with its system of privileges, is reflected in a particularly pernicious way in the health service and education. The condition of the health service and of popular education is clearly revealed in the run-down state of public hospitals, in the poverty of the village schools with their overcrowded classes, the poverty and low standing of the teacher, and the official hypocrisy in teaching which inculcates in the rising generation a spirit of indifference towards moral, artistic and scientific values.

The most essential condition for the cure of our society is the abandonment of political persecution, in its judicial and psychiatric forms, or in any other form of which our bureaucratic and bigoted system, with its totalitarian interference by the state in the life of the citizens, is capable, such as dismissal from work, expulsion from college, refusal of residence permits, limitation of promotion at work, etc.

The first beginnings of a moral regeneration of the people and the intelligentsia which resulted from the curbing of the most extreme manifestations of the Stalinist system of blind terror met with no proper understanding in ruling circles. The basic class, social and ideological features of the regime did not undergo any essential change. With pain

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and alarm I have to note that after a period of largely illusory liberalism there is once again an extension of restrictions on ideological freedom, efforts to suppress information which is not controlled by the state, fresh persecution for political and ideological reasons, and a deliberate aggravation of nationalities problems. The 15 months since the submission of the *Memorandum* have brought new and disturbing evidence about the development of these tendencies.

The wave of political arrests in the first few months of 1972 is particularly alarming. Numerous arrests took place in the Ukraine. Arrests have also taken place in Moscow, Leningrad and other regions of the country.

The attention of the public has also been drawn during these months to the trial of Bukovsky in Moscow and of Strokatova in Odessa, and other trials. The use of psychiatry for political purposes is fraught with extremely dangerous consequences for society and constitutes a completely inadmissible interference with basic human rights. There have been numerous protests and pronouncements on this question. At present Grigorenko, Gershuni and many others are being kept in prison-type psychiatric hospitals, the fate of Fainberg and Borisov is unknown; there are other instances of psychiatric repression (e.g. the case of the poet Lupynis in the Ukraine).[1]

The persecution and destruction of religion, which has been carried on with perseverance and cruelty for decades, has resulted in what is undoubtedly one of the most serious infringements of the rights of man in our country. Freedom of religious belief and activity is an integral part of intellectual freedom as a whole. Unfortunately the last few months have been marked by fresh instances of religious persecution, in particular in the Baltic states.

In this postscript I am passing over a series of important problems which were dealt with in the *Memorandum* and my other published documents—in the open letter to the members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 'On freedom to leave the country'[2] and to the Minister of Internal Affairs, 'On discrimination against the Crimean Tartars'.[3]

I also pass over the majority of international problems dealt with in the *Memorandum*. I will single out from their number the question of arms race limitations. Militarization of the economy leaves a deep imprint on international and domestic policy; it leads to encroachment on democratic rights, the open conduct of public affairs, and the rule of

[1] Anatoli Ivanovich Lupynis, born 1937, arrested in Kiev on 28 May 1971. In October 1971 he was sent to the Serbsky Institute, declared insane, diagnosis—schizophrenia. On 28 December 1971 a court in Kiev sent him for compulsory treatment to a mental hospital of the special type. Prior to the trial 'two witnesses testified that Lupynis gave them the works of Sakharov to read. Photocopies of articles by Sakharov taken from the archives of the KGB are annexed to the indictment as evidence.' (Cf. *Chronicle of Current Events*, Nos. 22 and 23.)

[2] Letter of 20 February 1971.

[3] N. A. Shchelokov.

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law; it constitutes a threat to peace. The role of the military-industrial complex in US policy has been thoroughly studied. The analogous role played by the same factors in the USSR and other socialist countries is less well-known. It is, however, necessary to point out that in no country does the share of military expenditure with relation to the national income reach such proportions as in the USSR (over 40 per cent). In an atmosphere of mutual suspicion the problem of control mentioned in the *Memorandum* assumes a special role.

I write this postscript a short time after the signing of important agreements on the limitation of ABM and strategic missiles. One would like to believe that political leaders and the people who are active in the military-industrial complexes of the USA and the USSR have a sense of responsibility towards humanity.

One would like to believe that these agreements are not merely of symbolic importance, but will lead to a real curtailment of the arms race and to further steps which would improve the political climate in our long-suffering world.

In conclusion, I consider it necessary to emphasize in particular the importance which I attach to the proposal for the setting up of an international consultative committee, 'The International Council of Experts', which would have the right to put forward recommendations to national governments which they would be obliged to consider (clause B(3) in the *Memorandum*). I think this proposal is feasible if it receives the wide international support for which I appeal, and I appeal not only to Soviet but to foreign readers. I hope too that my voice from 'inside' the socialist world may contribute in some measure to the understanding of the historical experience of the last decade.

June 1972

To the World Zionist Congress

I AM appealing to you, the finest representatives of the Jewish people, who have devoted your lives to the revival of a nation, in the hope that you will assist me to implement my lawful right to emigrate to Israel.

I am one of those Jews who have for many years been vainly fighting for their right to emigrate to Israel, their historical homeland. Throughout the whole of this time some rather strange things have been happening to me; particularly strange since they have been happening in a country which considers itself the most progressive and democratic in the world.

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I will draw your attention to some biographical facts concerning myself.

In January 1964, employees of the KGB conducted a search of my apartment, as a result of which my diary was confiscated. On the basis of notes made in my diary it was possible to deduce that the author was interested in Jewish history and culture, and that his attitude to the State of Israel was not one of indifference.

In the same year I was expelled from the Moscow Institute of Transport Engineers (MIIT). Officially, for inadequate academic proficiency, since I had not 'managed' to pass an examination in the history of the CPSU. At the time of my taking the examination Professor Revenko, head of the Institute's department of Communist Party history, declared: 'In our subject the most important thing is convictions, not knowledge. And we are well aware of your Zionist convictions. Don't waste our time for nothing.' When one of the Institute's professors tried to discover the reason for my expulsion he was told in strict confidence that 'Prussakov was connected with . . . Franco-Italian espionage'.

I need hardly supply evidence to refute this silly fabrication; reminiscent in its absurdity of the calumnies of the time of the cult of personality, it has absolutely nothing to do with me.

In May 1966 employees of the KGB conducted a search of my apartment in connexion with the case of Solomon Dolnik, who had been collecting and disseminating material on Jewish history and culture, on present-day Israel, and also on the position of the Jews in the USSR. During this search, 'criminal' articles were confiscated from me: the Torah (the Pentateuch), a badge from the Israeli exhibition of agricultural machinery that was on at the time in Moscow, and a few Israeli postcards and stamps.

Throughout the year 1966 I was repeatedly summoned to the KGB as a witness in the Dolnik case. And on 16 February 1967 it was my turn: on that day I was arrested on charges of anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.

The charge brought against me was based on two stories which I had written and which had been circulated by Dolnik.

In these stories I had written of manifestations of anti-semitism in the USSR and upheld the right of Soviet Jews to existence as a nation. I was also accused of participating in so-called 'nationalistic assemblies', which had consisted in listening to Jewish music and poetry and sometimes (*horribile dictu !*) programmes broadcast by Radio Kol Israel. The criminal caught in the act, as you see!

I paid for my 'criminal deeds' with a 13-month sojourn in Lefortovo Prison, from which I was released in March 1968, 'in connexion with a change of circumstances', as it appeared in the investigatory organs' decree of my discharge.

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In 1969 I began actively seeking permission to emigrate to Israel. In May of the same year I was savagely beaten by hooligans in the centre of Moscow. The result was a double fracture of the jaw. The hooligans made a successful getaway and their identities were never discovered.

It must be noted that the beating was accompanied by shouts of an anti-semitic nature.

Following this I continued actively to seek permission to leave for Israel, despite the fact that what was happening to me reminded me at times of the most nightmarish visions of Franz Kafka.

In April 1971 my wife and I were detained on the street by employees of the state security organs who announced that we were suspected of robbery. We were escorted to a police station where we were presented with a warrant for our arrest for having committed 'acts of hooliganism'.

After this we were subjected to a humiliating search, and our notebooks and various papers were confiscated. Amongst them was my appeal to the 24th Congress of the CPSU requesting permission to emigrate to Israel. The state security employees promised to return to us all the papers they had confiscated; however, to this day they have not done so.

Living in an atmosphere of arbitrariness and lawlessness, I have no confidence either in my future, or even in the present itself.

The only thing I am sure of is that my fate depends utterly on the whim of some high-ranking bureaucrat.

In this connexion I am reminded of the lines written by Hesiod, so appropriate to the present time: 'Why do you squeak, wretch? For I am far stronger than you! Drone on as much as you like, but I will carry you off, I, wherever I please. I can make a meal of you or give you your freedom.'

I beg you to do everything possible to secure me my right to leave for Israel.

I hope you will not remain indifferent to my fate.

January 1972.

Valentin Prussakov.

Moscow 113184, Pyatnitskaya ulitsa,
dom 29/8, kvartira 2.

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Address from the Catholics of Lithuania

The ferment in the Baltic states manifested itself this year in many forms, from the samizdat *letters of local communists against Russification, through the protests by the students against Soviet occupation, to the suicides by burning of Roman Kalanta, Zalizh Kauskas, and Andrus Hukavichus. We publish below the text of the petition of the Lithuanian Catholics. As reported by an American correspondent it consisted of five separate packets totalling 123 individual petitions, all worded in precisely the same way. The number of signatures on each ranged from a few to one with 562. Laid flat, they made an inch-thick stack.*

To the General Secretary of the United Nations Mr. Kurt Waldheim from the Catholics of Lithuania

ADDRESS

In view of the fact that Lithuania does not have its representatives in the United Nations, we, the Catholics of Lithuania, are obliged to turn to you, Mr. Secretary General, by making use of incidental channels.

Our plea is prompted by the fact that believers in our republic cannot enjoy the rights set out in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore our priests, a group of believers and individual Catholics have repeatedly addressed themselves to the supreme organs of the state in the Soviet Union, demanding an end to the violation of the rights of believers. Several petitions from believers were sent to the Soviet authorities, including: the declaration of believers in the town of Prienai, signed by 2,000 people and sent in September 1971; the declaration of believers in the parish of Santaika in the Alitus district, signed by 1,190 people and sent in October 1971, and the declaration by 1,344 parishioners in Girkalnis in the Rasieniai district, sent in December 1971. All these declarations were addressed to various supreme departments of the USSR, but not one of them sent an official answer although state institutions should reply to citizens' declarations in the course of one month. Intensified repression of believers constituted an unofficial reply.

The Catholics of all Lithuania decided to remind the Soviet leadership of their denial of rights in a memorandum to the General Secretary of the CPSU, G. (Grazhdanin or Gospodin?) Brezhnev, but the Soviet militia and the KGB, using threats, arrests and handcuffs, prevented the mass collection of signatures.

Such action by the authorities prompted the conviction that the

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present memorandum, signed by 17,000 believers, will not attain its aim if it is sent by the same means as previous collective declarations.

Therefore, we, the Catholics of Lithuania, address ourselves to you, respected Secretary General, and request that through the channels of the United Nations, you transmit the memorandum sent to you, together with the signatures, to the General Secretary of the CPSU, G. L. Brezhnev.

Respectfully,

Representatives of the Catholics of Lithuania

February, 1972

To the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union
The Kremlin, Moscow

From the Catholics of Lithuania

MEMORANDUM

Many years have passed since World War II ended; the people have restored the ruins and want permanent peace.

But justice and respect for human rights are the foundation of a sound peace. It is precisely for these rights that we, Catholics of Lithuania, are deeply concerned, because freedom of conscience is still lacking for the believers among our people and the Church is still subjected to persecution.

Our bishops, Ju. Steponavicius and V. Sladkiavicius, have already been exiled without trial or time limit, although they committed no crime.

In November 1971, the priests Ju. Zdebskis and P. Bubnis were sentenced to deprivation of freedom because, carrying out their duties, they explained the fundamentals of the Catholic faith to children at the request of parents. These priests were helping the children prepare for their first communion. Not in school but in church; not using force—those who wanted to, took part.

By contrast, atheism is forcibly inculcated in Lithuania's Soviet schools; the faithful children of Catholics are made to speak, write and act against their consciences, and those who conduct such forcible treatment are neither given warnings nor brought to trial.

Because of the necessary number of priests is lacking, the needs of believers remain unsatisfied. In many places, one priest must serve two or three parishes. Even invalid and aged priests must work. Such a situation arose because the affairs of the seminary are in the hands not of the bishop but of the representative of the authorities. The authorities allow only up to 10 students a year to be enrolled in the seminary. The representatives of the authorities also assign priests to parishes.

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There is an article in the criminal code of the Lithuanian SSR which provides for punishment for persecution of believers, but this article is never put into practice. In 1970, the peoples' Education Section of the Vilkavisskis District dismissed a teacher, O. Briliene, simply because she was a believer. For the same reason the district authorities do not allow the teacher to do any work in the town of Vilkavisskis, even as a cleaner. The perpetrators of such arbitrary actions remain unpunished; yet because of them, representatives of the intelligentsia are afraid to practise their beliefs openly.

The representatives of the authorities do not allow believers, even at their own expense, to restore burnt-out churches—for example, in Batakiai, Gaure and Sangruda parishes. Believers must obtain from the authorities, with great difficulty, permission to conduct services anywhere in a home, but in no case is it permitted to set up even a clocktower in a former churchyard. At the same time, a dance hall was allowed to be built in the parish of Andreivas where the church had stood.

We could give many other cases of discrimination, which sadden us and force us to be disappointed with the Soviet constitution and laws. Therefore, we ask the Soviet government to secure for us that freedom of conscience which is guaranteed by the USSR constitution but which has not so far existed in practice. We are not satisfied with fine words in the press and on the radio, so we expect such efforts by the government as will aid us Catholics in regarding ourselves as citizens of the Soviet Union with equal rights.

December 1971
January 1972

Annex to Memorandum

17,054 signatures are appended to the present memorandum. It should be pointed out that only an insignificant number of the believers in Lithuania have appended their signatures, since the militia and KGB undertook a whole series of measures to prevent the collection of signatures. In the towns of Kapsukas, Sakiai, Islauzas and Kapciamestis, several people participating in the collection of signatures were detained. One of them was even taken in handcuffs to the police station. Lists containing signatures were confiscated despite the fact that the memorandum is addressed to the Soviet government.

If in the future the organs of the state take the same attitude towards believers' complaints as they have until now, we will be obliged to address ourselves to international bodies: the Pope, the head of our church, or the United Nations, as an authoritative institution defending human rights.

Besides this, we want to inform you that the present memorandum is the outgrowth of a national calamity: in the years of Soviet power in Lithuania, such vices as juvenile crime, alcoholism and suicide have

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grown ten-fold, and divorces and abortions have taken on threatening proportions as well. The further we are removed from the Christian past, the clearer become the terrible consequences of forcible atheistic upbringing and the more widespread becomes an inhuman way of life deprived of God and religion.

We address ourselves to you, as the party's highest authority, with a request to examine the facts we have set out with all seriousness and responsibility and to make the necessary decision.

Representatives of the Catholics of Lithuania

January 1972

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Our Contributors

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